Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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FBIS-NES-95-039 *28 February 1995*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Palestinian-Israeli Economic Committee Convenes

Issues on Agenda Detailed

JN2702073995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The joint Palestinian-Israeli Economic Committee will hold a meeting at the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry in Jericho today. The Palestinian side will be led by Ahmad Quray', minister of economy, trade, and industry, while the Israeli side will be headed by Avraham Shohat, minister of finance.

The two delegations will comprise representatives from all ministries concerned with the implementation of the economic agreement signed between the Palestinian and Israeli sides in Paris.

The meeting will deal with 40 issues, including the Israeli military siege of the Palestinian territories and its impact on the economic agreement. It will also deal with the establishment of industrial zones and trade issues, including expanding lists A and B of the Palestinian-Israeli economic agreement and the flow of commodities among the Palestinian territories, Israel, Jordan, and Egypt.

The two ministers will hold a news conference at the end of the meeting.

Quray' Comments on Meeting

JN2702165495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ahmad Quray', also known as Abu-'Ala', Palestinian minister of economy and trade, and Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat met today in Jericho. They discussed several issues related to the economy and the obstacles that Israel places on the path of the Palestinian commercial march.

To talk to us about what was discussed and the results of the meeting, Salwa Abu-Libdah had the following interview with Ahmad Quray':

[Begin recording] [Abu-Libdah] What subjects did you discuss in today's meeting?

[Quray'] We discussed seven basic issues and 41 secondary issues, which were all raised by the Palestinian side. I consider the acceptance of the agenda proposed by the Palestinian party for the meeting a positive step. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Libdah] As regards the issue of the workers [words indistinct], have you raised the issue of workers' return to work inside Israel?

[Quray'] In fact, there are two parts to this issue. First, I personally believe we should not rely on Israel in [word indistinct]. We must set our own policies to create job opportunities. We cannot, and should not, continue to rely on Israel. We must stop relying on them, be independent and rely on ourselves. Second, I believe that from an ethical, political, and any other viewpoint, the Israelis are responsible for the unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza. Therefore, they must contribute to the process of creating job opportunities in the West Bank and Gaza. I believe the proposal made by Israeli Environment Minister Yosi Sarid is a very good one, provided that such a proposal is formulated and discussed by the two parties. I believe that Israel must bear the responsibility and must pay a certain amount of money for years to come to enable us to create job opportunities and address the problem of unemployment, which they created because they ignored the infrastructure and hampered the Palestinian economy. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Shohat, Quray' Discuss Cooperation, Projects

TA2702175895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Israeli] Finance Minister Avraham Shohat has assured his Palestinian counterpart Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] that Israeli moves toward separation will not interfere with economic cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA]. The two men headed negotiating teams at a meeting in Jericho this morning of the Israel-PLO Economic Committee. Mark Weiss reports:

[Begin recording] [Weiss] There were more than 45 items on the agenda of the Jericho meeting. Some points of agreement were reached, and joint subcommittees will start meeting next week to tackle the outstanding points of difference. The Palestinians are worried that when Israel takes concrete steps toward separation the first victim will be the Paris agreement on Israeli-Palestinian economic cooperation. However, Finance Minister Avraham Shohat assured Abu-'Ala' that this was not the case:

[Shohat] I stated very clearly that because of security reasons we want to create a situation in which economical connections will continue while reducing the danger of terror activity to prevent such a situation in which we shall be in an impossible situation. But we are not going to speak, and I told Mr. Abu-'Ala', we are not speaking about cutting the relations, but about movement of goods and trade between Israel and the PA.

[Weiss] Abu-'Ala' implied that separation would be acceptable to the Palestinians as long as the process does not negate the Paris agreement:

[Abu-'Ala'] Well, as you know, we are not against the separation, but separation in all fields: political, economical, etc., to rebuild our relations on cooperation and equality. I believe that is our strategic target, and we will reach it with Israel. We start to build those relations on the basis of cooperation, not on the basis of dependency or integration.

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[Weiss] Finance Minister Shohat recognized the need for investments and raising the standard of living in Gaza and the West Bank and the importance of economic prosperity to the success of the peace process as a whole.

The two sides made progress on the establishment of industrial parks along the Green Line border of both Gaza and the West Bank. The project will create thousands of jobs for Palestinians and will be partly financed by the Americans. [end recording]

Israelis, Palestinians Discuss Agricultural Issues

JN2602170095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Palestinian delegation, led by Mahmud Abu-Samrah, director general of the Agriculture Ministry, met today with an Israeli delegation led by (Shaike) Erez at the Erez Crossing.

The two sides discussed the process of marketing, including imports, exports, and control measures.

Abu-Samrah said the two sides discussed the entry of Palestinian trucks into Israel, which has allowed the entry of five trucks laden with Palestinian fruit juice. He added that the two sides also discussed bringing in palm trees from Egypt to the areas of the National Authority.

He stressed that the two sides had agreed on some issues and the Palestinian side is still waiting for answers on certain other issues.

Islamic Affairs

OIC Fund To Invest $50 Million in Palestinian Areas

JN2402111295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Usamah al-Faqih, the governor of the Islamic Development Bank, has said that the Islamic Fund for Investment and Export Security [IFIES] [al-sunduq al-islami li daman al-istithmarat wa al-sadirat] has earmarked $50 million to finance agricultural projects in the liberated Palestinian areas.

On another level, al-Faqih said that the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] will as of next July establish a fund for encouraging and protecting investments in Islamic countries. Al-Faqih said that the IFIES will have a capital of approximately $145 million and will be financed by the Islamic Development Fund. He added that the fund will be devoted to encouraging investments and economic exchanges among member states.

Al-Faqih said that the Islamic Development Bank paid $1.4 billion in 1994 to increase economic exchanges among the OIC states.

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 17 Feb

NC2302194595

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 17 February edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Trade Union Law Amendments Protested
2. Writer Criticizes Parliament's Actions
3. Human Rights Group Refutes Interior Minister's Allegations
4. Appeal Urges Front To Fight Zionism, Normalization
5. Scholar on Moderate Current's Role
6. University Students Commemorate Hebron Massacre
7. Rally Underlines Need for Free Elections
8. Secretary on NPT, NATO, Human Rights Report

TRADE UNION LAW AMENDMENTS PROTESTED

A 700-word report by 'Abd-al-Hayy Muhammad and Khalid Yunus on page 1 says that trade unions will hold a meeting at the Doctors Association on Monday, 20 February, to "stand up to the amendments made on the trade union law."

The report adds that trade union members are expected to "march" to the republican palace in 'Abidin "to protest the imposition of custodianship on and suppression of the syndicates' freedoms" unless the government takes a positive step.

According to the report, a trade-union delegation submitted a memorandum to the Presidential Office last Thursday "rejecting law No. 100 and its suspicious amendments and demanding its abrogation." The delegation requested a meeting with the president to present trade-union demands.

Moreover, the report adds, scores of journalists observed a sit- in at the Press Association on Tuesday to protest the amendment in question and demand its abrogation. Representatives of parties, political powers, and trade unions issued a statement following a dialogue "organized by the Muslim Brotherhood," condemning the government assault on popular establishments and trade unions "with the goal of nationalizing them." The statement demanded "the immediate release of political detainees and prisoners held because of their views" and called for "establishing freedom of expression and thought; consolidating democracy as a foundation for stability and political reform and a springboard for ending the phenomenon of violence and terrorism; and calling off the state of emergency."

The statement "supports the government's refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Palestinian people's struggle to liberate their land, and the struggle of the Muslim people in Bosnia and Chechnya." It also "rejects all forms of terrorism by states and

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individuals, rejects all forms of normalization with the Zionist enemy, and demands the lifting of the blockade imposed on the Arab Muslim people in Iraq, Libya, and all the occupied Arab territories."

The report notes "work stoppages" by lawyers, engineers, doctors, and pharmacists to protest the law amendments.

A 100-word unattributed report on the same page says that political and national powers in Ismailia issued a statement in which "they expressed concern at the continued campaign to detain key figures and leading national trade unionists and stressed the need to immediately release all detained trade unionists and political prisoners, abolish all emergency and freedom-restricting laws, and establish the freedom to form parties."

WRITER CRITICIZES PARLIAMENT'S ACTIONS

A 500-word article by Mahmud Bakri in the "Candid Word" column, page 12, maintains that the Egyptian parliament is the "worst ever," because it passes "arbitrary laws" to silence voices, do away with the remaining bit of freedom, and get rid of the honest elements to replace them with opportunists.

Enumerating such laws, Bakri cites the trade union law amendments that seek to counter the Islamists' control, and the law on fighting terrorism which seeks to silence honest and bold voices.

He maintains that by passing such laws, the government has turned public opinion against it and isolated the ruling party.

Bakri concludes that this "despotic" government and its "false" parliament fail to realize that these practices unite the nation and bring all kinds of people together. He warns that this shows the seriousness of what the country might experience in the days to come.

HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP REFUTES INTERIOR MINISTER'S ALLEGATIONS

A 500-word unattributed report, pages 1 and 6, says that the Egyptian Human Rights Organization's Trustee Council held an emergency meeting to respond to allegations that it is tarnishing Egypt's reputation.

The council issued a statement affirming that the campaign against the organization is "building up, at a time when there are growing doubts about the government's intentions to provoke nongovernmental organizations, particularly those working in human rights."

The statement stressed that the organization's eagerness to protect Egypt's reputation calls for "exposing the violations that greatly harm our country's name."

The council maintains that the Ministry of Interior "totally ignores" the organization's memoranda about cases of torture and human rights violations.

Affirming its rejection of the practices of armed groups, the organization reiterates that it is "just as much against the authority's arbitrary arrest campaigns, torture, tribunals, and killings beyond the limits of the law."

APPEAL URGES FRONT TO FIGHT ZIONISM, NORMALIZATION

Page 12 features a 350-word "appeal to organize a popular movement to resist Zionism and boycott Israel." The appeal is followed by "a list of signatories," featuring people of various categories. It warns that "the Israeli so-called peace scheme seeks to exchange part of the Arab land for total control of the nation's mind, spirit, and economic resources" through the normalization process.

The appeal calls on the nation's powers to join efforts in a common action to protect the nation's identity, interests, and resources; invite the nation to use all possible means to achieve the goal of independence and unity; and tighten the popular grip on the "Zionist being" by boycotting Zionist commodities and ideas.

The appeal says that the signatories announce the establishment of a committee to prepare for a permanent conference to discuss and approve a working program to resist Zionist control in its various forms, particularly the Middle Eastern market and the normalization process.

SCHOLAR ON MODERATE CURRENT'S ROLE

The "Dialogue" page, page 9, features a 3,000-word article by Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi entitled "Priorities in the Field of Reform and Innovation: The Priority of the Intellectual Battle".

Al-Qaradawi sets out by classifying existing currents into four categories. These are the mythical, which is characterized by belief in superstition, heresy in creed, a rigid mentality, copying old jurisprudence, negative conduct, and cajolery in politics; the professional, which is characterized by a controversial approach in creed, formality in worship, judging by the apparent in jurisprudence, focusing on trivia, dryness of spirit, roughness in preaching, and annoyance at any difference; the violent rejectionist, which is based on rigid and firm adherence to religion, pride in oneself, doubting others, narrow-mindedness, rushing into accusing others of atheism, and using force to achieve goals; and the moderate, which is based on moderation in understanding religion and life, standing in between the old and new and coping with the age, using dialogue and good counselling, and taking jihad as an approach to defending Islamic sanctities. He says that the moderate current "is what we believe in, preach, and view as the real expression of Islam."

He notes that this moderate current is "the subject of hope for the future" and that it has to try to "give prominence to its call, bring up loyal people, persuade

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adversaries, initiate a dialogue with opponents, and strive to escape the traps designed to drag it into what it neither wants nor likes."

Al-Qaradawi maintains that "hostile powers inside and outside fear that current the most and harbor antipathy and hostility to it more than to other currents." He notes "a new tune" that warns of moderate Islam, which is bound to stay longer than other short-lived currents, and he adds that they take Islam as the new enemy or the "green threat," as opposed to "the Red threat" of communism. He stresses that the moderate current should stand up to those people, expose their falsity, and initiate a dialogue with "their moderate elements." He adds that it should confront "their disciples inside the Islamic nation" who bear Muslim names and are yet hostile to the Islamic cultural plan.

Describing the hostile elements inside as "the Westernized among our people," Dr. al-Qaradawi points out that "our real battle on our own land should be with the immoderates among the secularists and remaining Marxists, who put on their Western liberal attire and mobilize all their pens and weapons to wage a war on the Islamic awakening and revival, distort its call, block its preachers, and invent new terms to scare people away from it, like political Islam or fundamentalism." He adds that these people "drive a wedge between Islamists and ruling regimes to exhaust the country's powers in bloody conflicts." He cautions that shifting the battle from that front and inventing enemies from among the Islamists themselves diverts us from the real enemy that wants to push Muslims against each other.

Al-Qaradawi believes that it is the duty of the moderate current to close the Islamic ranks and bring Islamists together on the undisputed basics, even if they differ on details and branches. He finds no harm in the existence of numerous groups that work for Islam, so long as each specializes in a specific branch without conflicting with the others.

He sees a need for intellectual efforts to bring those working for Islam together to support the call, apply Islamic canons, unite the nation, and implant confidence and tolerance. He warns that unless Muslims are wary of the repercussions of their current discord, they will all be eaten up by anti-Islamic powers. "If we cannot bring the powers of our great nation together from ocean to ocean, let us at least try to unite the powers of the major factions of the Islamic revival who are responsive to dialogue and understanding" by eliminating excesses, reconciling views, coordinating stands, and organizing a united rank when it comes to fateful issues.

Noting that most Islamists advocate the application of Islamic shari'ah and, admitting that this matter should not be overlooked, he explains that going too far in demanding this has reflected negatively on Islamic thought and action and helped the rivals of Islam use this against Muslims. He believes that this issue should be given the right amount of action it deserves through "an integrated, contemporary Islamic upbringing that takes care of the child from the nursery until he graduates from the university." He points out that this should not be exclusive to religion lessons but should cover all scientific and literary subjects our children study and even school activities. He stresses the need for standing up to the "imported, nonreligious materialistic curricula and philosophies."

Al-Qaradawi stresses the importance of the media and culture which make the mentalities and shape style and lines of thinking. He believes that the media should not be left to people who do not believe in Islam. He states that efforts in this context should work along two axes: preparing Muslim cadres to work in the media as writers, scenarists, directors, actors, and photographers; and, trying to win the present artists and media people by teaching them their religion and persuading them to repent and join the convoy of Islam advocates.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS COMMEMORATE HEBRON MASSACRE

150-word report by Tariq 'Abd-al-Hamid, page 6, says that 300 students at Cairo University staged a march to commemorate the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre. The students set fire to the Israeli flag and shouted slogans urging "jihad against Zionists."

RALLY UNDERLINES NEED FOR FREE ELECTIONS

A 1,000-word report by Salah al-Nahif and Jamal al-Imbabi, page 2, gives an account of a rally organized by the Labor Party on 13 February.

Speaking to the rally, Labor Party leader Ibrahim Shukri talked about discord in the Arab nation, human rights violations in Egypt that are "denounced by the entire world," NATO's attempts to "destroy Islam in coordination with Islamic states," attempts to deal a blow to trade unions, and the pressure being put on Egypt and Arabs to sign the Nonproliferation Treaty so that "Israel can tell Arabs that this nuclear weapon will remain aimed at Arabs and Muslims to overpower them."

Shukri pointed out that boycotting the legislative elections is contrary to the people's interests. He called for free elections.

Speaking at the same rally, Islamic preacher Shaykh Muhammad al-Sharif explained that "war against Jews is inevitable until Doomsday." He wonders how the people can be mobilized to fight the enemy if they are persecuted and deprived of their basic human rights.

PARTY SECRETARY ON NPT, NATO, HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

A 5,000-word article by Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn, page 5, senses in recent developments "a state of panic and submission to American-Israeli schemes." He believes that the foreign minister's "fiery

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statements" on the Nonproliferation Treaty are "worthless, both legally and militarily" because "even if Israel agrees to sign the treaty, this does not mean that it will destroy its stock of nuclear warheads." He says that officials declare their refusal to sign the treaty and, in the meantime, rush to implement all the policies and make all the concessions to Israel. Accordingly, this refusal to sign is useless, he says.

Recalling his earlier analysis, Husayn says that the Cairo summit was transformed from an emergency meeting to "an establishment involving specific parties and goals, led by the United States and Israel and branches into specialized bodies to implement decisions." He says that the Taba meeting sought to expand trade relations between the Arab states involved and Israel and to officially end the Arab boycott of Israel.

Turning to the Washington meeting, he says that its final statement "wrested no Israeli concession on outstanding political and military issues" and that "it specifically discussed the enhancement of trade exchange and the setting up of free-trade zones on the borders between Israel and its neighbors."

He notes that the Egyptian Government no longer objects to or protests the U.S.-supported Israeli position on withdrawal, the settlements, and Jerusalem and that "it has joined those rushing to establish Greater Israel."

Going back to the Gulf crisis, he says that Egypt's gain was writing off half of its debts "as a reward for taking part in the American-Israeli war." He notes, however, that writing off the debts sought to "continue to involve us in supporting the American-Israeli policy" by obliging us to implement the IMF and World Bank agreements "that seek to ruin the Egyptian economy and disarm it in the face of the Israeli economy." He adds that the decision to write off debts "was the price the government obtained for accepting economic policies that stopped development and for its consent to open the doors for imports to kill national industries and then sell the surviving ones to foreigners and Zionists."

He underlines the need to develop "an alternative national vision of how to reform the economy, develop the public sector, and urge the private sector to enhance development rates." He notes, however, that the present regime, with its corruption, is unable to do that.

Turning to the Brussels meeting between NATO and representatives from Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, and Israel, Husayn notes that the meeting "discussed joint plans and measures to fight Islamic terrorism...and decided to transfer NATO maneuvers to fight Islamic terrorism from Europe to the Middle East." He says that the "Egyptian Government's joining of that satanic alliance officially and publicly represents a very dangerous shift and all national powers must stand in one line against this call to invite armed imperialism back to our countries."

Husayn cites the U.S. House of Representatives speaker, who reviewed the U.S. policy on fighting the Islamic revival, stressed the need to speed up efforts to reach settlement agreements between Arabs and Israel as a necessity to stop the Islamic revival, and stressed that the Iranian and Sudanese regimes must be toppled and that Islamists must not be allowed to take power in any other state.

Husayn points out that the Islamic revival is not a party movement or political maneuver, but the movement of an entire nation that rose in the name of God. He adds that it is the hope for liberation from Western and Zionist colonialism.

Returning to the local front, Husayn stresses that "this corrupt regime, which continues to retreat before the enemies and fails to build or reform, must be changed."

Referring to the State Department's human rights report, Husayn remarks that the interior minister's reply was "a nervous denial" of all the information the report stated. We certainly differ with the U.S. foreign policy, particularly in the field of human rights...but this does not refute the fact that everything the report said about the state of human rights in Egypt was true," Husayn affirms. "We are aware of the harsh conditions under which the security agencies work. But this absolutely does not justify all these excesses," he says. Affirming that all that came in the U.S. report was right, he dares the authorities to set up a neutral fact-finding committee to examine the matter.

Husayn points out that the government's reliance on the security agencies alone in suppressing the opposition leads to more despotism. "It is the duty of the rulers to watch out for the fact that the crimes of violating rights and freedoms have exceeded all limits. The decision-makers should intervene immediately to restrict the powers granted to the oppressive apparatuses," Husayn says.

Husayn emphasizes that the rulers' retreat before the enemy and their failure to bring about any reform makes their replacement the top priority. He believes that the current crisis lies in the fact that the rulers insist on staying in their positions by force and by cornering the opposition. "This approach will solve no problem; it will further aggravate the political crisis," he says, affirming that "rigging public elections will not be as easy next year."

Addressing the rulers, he states that arresting the Labor Party and Muslim Brotherhood members will not solve any problem. "You should better abandon obstinacy and find another way out of your impasse," he says.

Document on MB World Organization Said Exposed

NC2202190095 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 17 Feb 95 pp 70-72

[Report by Hamdi Rizq]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Perhaps this is the first time that we have laid hands on a document belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood [MB] International Organization. Without any need for speculations about the existence of this organization, the minutes of the organization's sixth congress which was held in Istanbul, Turkey after the second Gulf war—the text of which we are publishing here—not only asserts that the organization exists but also reveals its internal workings, objectives, and methods. These methods aim to control several Arab capitals, notably Cairo, which the organization's leadership "the International Guidance Bureau" considers the Muslim Brothers' first target capital. The process of controlling it comes in the context of what the Muslim Brothers call the plan of empowerment and control.

More dangerous than the document itself is the fact that its author is Mustafa Mashhur, who signed it with his nickname "Abu- Hani" in his capacity as amir of the International Organization. Mashhur and other Muslim Brotherhood leaders insist on disavowing this document and even deny the existence of the organization itself. The document is important because it includes a history of the Muslim Brothers' clandestine activities on the world stage, exposes their schemes in all the Arab countries, and represents a comprehensive review of all the organization's failures 12 years after its establishment on 9 Shawwal 1402 of the Hegira (29 July 1982). In the document, the Brothers admit their failure to subdue Hasan al-Turabi's group in Sudan and their inability to chastise Syria's Ba'th regime following the events of Hamah in the early 1980's [Syrian Government's major crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood's strongholds in that city] despite the fact that they sought assistance from Iraq's Ba'th branch. In the document, they emphasize the need to review their plans for Tunisia in light of the lack of success of the Ennahda group under the leadership of their man in Tunisia Dr. Rached Ghannouchi who now lives in exile in Paris. In the document, the Muslim Brothers renew their policy towards the Kuwaiti Muslim Brothers who rebelled against Cairo's Brothers and withdrew completely from the International Organization because its leadership backed Saddam Husayn's occupation of Kuwait.

The document, which Mustafa Mashhur, amir of the International Organization, authored and submitted to the congress held in Istanbul, Turkey in Muharram 1412 of the Hegira [1992] spells out with precision the objectives of the organization, namely the need to establish a Brotherhood capital—other than Khartoum—at the earliest opportunity and specifies the methods by which the plan can be carried out. This starts out with serious thinking about reestablishing the "al-Jihad" apparatus, that is, the "military organization," by reviving what used to be known as the "special order," that is, the MB military organization within the Army.

The document does not neglect the economic aspect of the plan "of empowerment and control" within which the "Cairo Brothers" are operating. This aspect emphasizes the need to establish "an economic institution" belonging to the "organization" and also a "media institution."

The document admits weaknesses within the Muslim Brothers' international movement and stresses the importance of dividing the International Organization's activities into bureaus (units) in order to prevent the "Cairo Brothers" from monopolizing the organization. The Cairo Brothers fill eight out of 13 seats on the International Guidance Bureau. This issue was the most serious crisis to face the organization after the second Gulf war. It led to secession by "al-Turabi's group," the establishment of the so- called Arab People's Islamic Congress (also Muslim Brothers), and dissension by the "Kuwait Brothers" who accused the "Cairo Brothers" of bias towards the Iraqis during the Gulf war.

The document recommends that the wording of the Allegiance Text be reviewed in such a manner as to make clear to whom allegiance should be given. According to the document, al-Turabi's Muslim Brothers "retracted their allegiance" and refused to obey the instructions of Cairo's Muslim Brotherhood General Guide Hamid Abu-al-Nasr. Counselor Ma'mun al-Hudaybi [Muslim Brotherhood official spokesman] carried these instructions to Khartoum during a visit he made to Sudan immediately after 'Umar al-Bashir's regime was established. The document acknowledges the Muslim Brotherhood International Organization's failure to control al-Turabi's Muslim Brothers and Kuwait's Muslim Brothers. The document says that the International Guidance Bureau is planning a comprehensive review and reassessment of the Brotherhood's status, organs, regulations, methods, general policies, and interim policies. This review is deemed necessary to assess the Brotherhood's competence and its ability to handle current developments. It also calls for forming "an emergency committee" consisting exceptionally of the International Organization's General Guide (Mustafa Mashhur) and the members of the International Guidance Bureau (half of whom are Egyptian) and the supervisors of the movement in each country where the movement operates. The emergency committee's task is to review and implement this plan. [passage omitted]

The writer of the report (Mustafa Mashhur) is nicknamed Abu-Hani in the document. In the introduction, he stresses the necessity and legitimacy of launching the International Organization. He mentions the following reasons for this:

—After spreading in almost all countries, the International Organization shows that the Muslim Brotherhood has an international nature. This helps the group expand and grow under a leadership that unifies inclinations and educational methods. Division and regionalism do not provide such a chance.

—The International Organization, through the system of solidarity, cohesion, support, and coordination, gives

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the various regional organizations a bigger chance to achieve "empowerment" (this term refers to the Brotherhood's plans to infiltrate positions of power and penetrate state institutions like the Army, police, trade unions, students, and other influential sectors; we discussed this in past issues of AL-MUSAWWAR)

—The Brotherhood's objective of "empowerment" is difficult to achieve except in the climate of an international organization unifying the Brotherhood groups. This will help mobilize energies and achieve coordination between institutions and cooperation among leaders for the birth of the "Brotherhood state."

In the "objectives" clause of Mashhur's report, he says that these objectives were set half a century ago by Imam Hasan al-Banna. The most serious of these is the return to the Islamic Caliphate state and the return to playing the role of "master" in the world. The objectives of the International Organization are defined in the regulations (the group's statute) as follows:

—Assuming rule in an Arab or a Muslim country and making concerted and intensive efforts to achieve this. Cairo is nominated as the primary target.

—Helping the developing Brotherhood groups in the various countries and providing them with expertise and advice to strengthen them.

—Supporting any "tested" group (subjected to ordeals) in any country materially, morally, and through the media.

—Influencing clashing intellectual trends in the world and proposing the Brotherhood's solution as the only solution to the problems of humanity in this universe.

—Helping (jihad movements) in any country, and providing the so- called mujahidin with the money, experience, and men they need.

—Resolving differences and disputes and determining the legitimate authority when such differences occur within the ranks of the group in the various countries. [passage omitted]

These are the objectives. As regards the methods to realize them, the report says the regulations of the Muslim Brotherhood International Organization stipulate in Clause 3 that the following methods will be used to achieve the above-mentioned objectives:

—"Preaching" through publications, press, magazines, and books, and sending delegations and emissaries within the country and abroad.

—"Education" ideologically, mentally, and morally. The regulations do not ignore physical training and sports to entrench the values of brotherhood and cohesion.

—"Guidance" by preparing curricula on all societal affairs, such as education, legislation, judiciary, administration, economy, health, and "soldiership and government"!!

—"Work", by establishing educational, social, economic, and scientific institutions; by building mosques, schools, clinics, shelters, and clubs; and by forming committees to organize zakat, that is, alms collection (the same role played by the mosques of the Religious Society in Egypt)

—"Jihad", which begins by preparing the nation in the spirit of jihad to stand as one front in preparation for the establishment of the hoped-for state. Steps should be gradual, and the reality and the ability to implement this should be considered. [passage omitted]

The most dangerous part of this report is the part that deals with preparing the nation for jihad. This is what Mustafa Mashhur says, verbatim: "The Muslim Brotherhood must seriously rethink reestablishing the jihad apparatus." He adds that some brothers believe that more than 12 years since the International Organization of the Brotherhood was formed there are other aspects of the means to change that must be considered and explained that in order to arrive at a specific religious concept of the most important means of effecting change in our societies. In addition to the constitutional struggle, there are other options, such as the special organization and the Muslim Brotherhood military organization in the army. [passage omitted]

The report refers to several issues that need decisive solution:

The issue of alliance with or help from one regime against another, even though both are secular regimes, as happened with the Iraqi regime when an alliance was formed with it against the Syrian regime; or the unsuccessful attempts to establish ties with al- Qadhdhafi to pressure the Tunisian regime and the resulting confusion caused to the Brotherhood and the political pressure on it; or its being forced to declare a truce with one regime while ignoring that regime's plans and negative aspects:

The issue of entering into political alliances with secular parties in certain countries to participate in parliamentary activities, as happened in Egypt:

The third issue is participation in the rule under non-Islamic governments as happened previously in Syria and with the brothers in Sudan during Numayri's rule, and as happened in Jordan. [passage omitted]

The document charts a complete plan for the future of the organization involving distribution of work in the international organization and endorsing the principle of decentralization in six bureaus in Europe, Africa, Asia, the United States, the Gulf, and greater Syria, while the Cairo bureau remains the center. Each bureau has its own secretariat and organs parallel to the International Organization. These bureaus formulate the goals, means, right of membership, and are to reformulate the procedure for electing the general guide and specifying his tenure—the MB system in Cairo provides that the general guide remain in office until his death—and members of the guidance bureau. A proposal outlined in the

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document maintains that the Muslim Brotherhood should hold a congress every three or four years, including the members of the bureau, the consultative council, committees members, and leaders of the MB in various countries. The council can choose members of the guidance bureau, not to exceed seven. The task of the council is to lead the MB on the world level. There is also a consultative council of 17 members. The main goal of these measures is to deal with the effects resulting from the Gulf war. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Official Denies Proposal To Extend Authority to Negev

JN2702150995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, official spokesman of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], has denied a report carried today by the Israeli media, particularly the newspaper MA'ARIV, which claimed that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin proposed to President Yasir 'Arafat in their recent meeting that the PNA be expanded to parts of the Negev.

Replying to MA'ARIV's allegations, Abu-Rudaynah said that the Palestinian and Israeli sides did not discuss this issue in their talks. Meanwhile, the PNA is committed to the Declaration of Principles which provides for the Israeli Army's withdrawal from the remainder of the West Bank's cities, villages, and camps as a prelude to holding the legislative elections, as was agreed, he added.

'Arafat Reportedly Promises To Reduce Police Force

TA2602110995 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 26 Feb 95 p 12

[Report by Shefi Gabay and Eli Bohadana]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has instructed commanders of Gaza Strip police stations not to recruit any more men. He also announced that he will fire 2,000 policemen in early March.

The Palestinian Authority recently presented Israel with a list of the 9,000 people recruited into the police force. Under the agreement between the two states, the Palestinian police are meant to number only 6,000 men. Israel protested to 'Arafat, who announced yesterday that he intended to reduce manpower.

He also had good news: Saudi Arabia is prepared to donate $7.5 million to cover police salaries for February and March.

Former Nabulus Mayor Bassam al-Shak'ah, who was wounded in the legs in a car bomb explosion, yesterday announced the establishment of a new Palestinian organization: The Palestinian National Front, which is opposed to the Israeli-PLO accords. [passage omitted]

No 'Prospect for Optimism' in Christopher's Tour

TA2702142795 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Feb 95 p 11

[Editorial: "Where Is the 'Honest Broker'?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The reports, confirmed by official U.S. and Israeli sources two nights ago, about an expected visit by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the region in the first week of March came as the result of a series of developments that underscore the impasse in the peace process despite the intense efforts exerted lately at the highest levels, whether in Cairo, in Washington, at the Erez checkpoint, or in Paris, aimed at advancing the peace process and ending the current stalemate.

Undoubtedly, the announcement of Christopher's expected visit, under the rubric of invigorating the talks on the Syrian and Palestinian tracks, does not hold much prospect for optimism, especially since the U.S. position and role in the peace process remain biased in practice toward Israel. At best, that position is one of an observer of the facts that are imposed on the ground by the force of occupation—facts that are in contravention of international legitimacy and the foundations and principles of the peace process.

Another example of this U.S. role is the U.S. objection, declared by U.S. officials, to discussing the settlements issue in the Security Council as requested by the Arab camp. This request was made in an attempt to stop the settlement activities that Israel continues to carry out in the occupied territories, foremost of all in Arab Jerusalem. These activities are in contravention of the resolutions of international legitimacy and the spirit, goals, and foundations of the peace process.

Naturally, the biased U.S. positions in favor of Israel are not limited to this issue. Perhaps, the impasse in the peace process on the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks due to Israeli intransigence and U.S. disregard of the role that the United States is presumed to play as a sponsor of the peace process represents a more comprehensive example of U.S. bias toward Israeli dictates.

When Washington moves actively to impose the continuation of the siege on the Iraqi people—with all the ensuing destruction and killing of Iraqi children, women, and old people—under the pretexts and justifications of "international legitimacy," and when Washington insists on its stance regarding Libya under the same pretexts, it again reveals the double standard of its policy and positions as well as its clear bias in favor of Israel and its inertia in its role of an honest broker.

From this premise, if the United States continues with such an approach that has been proved not to serve the

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advancement of the peace process, Christopher's upcoming tour will be no different from the previous ones in terms of presenting the mirage of a breakthrough and spreading the delusion of movement in or of the invigoration of the peace process. This process is now threatened with collapse not only because of Israeli intransigence but also because of the U.S. policy, which so far has not dealt with the peace process with the required seriousness and the presumed honesty.

Sha'th Meets Jordanian Delegates; al-Kabariti To Visit

JN2602202895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Planning and International Cooperation Minister Dr. Nabil Sha'th has received Ahmad al-Hasanat, assistant secretary general of the Foreign Ministry, and his accompanying delegation, at the ministry in Gaza. Talks during the meeting dealt with bilateral relations and the preparations for setting up a Jordanian representative office in Gaza.

Dr. Sha'th expressed his happiness at the Jordanian delegation's presence in Gaza, reiterating the strength of the distinguished Palestinian-Jordanian relations.

Al-Hasanat said that he came to Gaza to prepare for the opening of a Jordanian representative office in Gaza as a beginning for the Jordanian diplomatic representation to the Palestinian National Authority. The Jordanian official expressed his happiness at visiting Gaza, adding that Jordanian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti will visit the Gaza Strip after 'Id al-Fitr.

14 Reportedly Wounded in Clashes in Hebron

JN2802100295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0900 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Violent clashes with the Israeli occupation forces occurred in the Bab al-Zawiyah area in Hebron last night, in which 14 citizens were wounded. Our Hebron correspondent said the Israeli soldiers fired rubber bullets and hurled sound and gas bombs at the citizens. A two-year-old child and a 16-year-old boy were also wounded.

Official Denies Reports on Handover of 'Adnan Yasin

JN2702193195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Marwan Kanafani, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, has denied a report published in a London-based newspaper on the PLO's intention to hand over to Israel 'Adnan Yasin [PLO security officer detained by Palestinian security on charges of being an Israeli agent]. Kanafani said that such reports are baseless and that the stand of the National Authority and PLO is very clear.

Shaykh Yasin on Hamas Goals, Palestinians' Future

95AA0070C Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic 26 Dec 94 p 5

[Interview with Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, imprisoned Hamas leader, by unidentified correspondent in the "occupied territories"; date not given: "We Must Be Vigilant; Palestinian Civil War Is a Forbidden Act"—first three paragraphs are AL-MUHARRIR introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] After exhausting attempts, AL-MUHARRIR was able to slip into the cell of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the spiritual leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas). It found him a sturdy man, as everyone knows him to be. Injustice has not harmed his morale or his confidence in his people.

Shaykh Ahmad Yasin renewed the movement's rejection of the Oslo agreement and all its consequences. He stated that Hamas would hold fast to holy war as the only way to liberate all of Palestine.

He spoke about relations with the self-rule authority, about how the Islamic world must hold fast to holy war as long as Palestine remains occupied, and about differences in theoretical outlook within Hamas. The following is the text of AL-MUHARRIR's exclusive interview:

[AL-MUHARRIR] What in your view were the causes of the bloody events that took place in Gaza's Palestine Mosque on the bloody Friday of 18 November 1994?

[Yasin] In my view, the Oslo agreement naturally is the reason, because it asks the Palestinian National Authority to maintain Israeli security—meaning that the Palestinian Authority [PA] is required to fight everyone who resists the Israelis who occupy our land and holy places.

One notices that Israeli and international pressures on the authority are increasing, to push it to establish its existence by eliminating the Islamic resistance movements, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, because they have refused to lay down their arms. Under these pressures the PA has been dragged into combatting the Islamic upsurge and proving its power on the ground.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Recently released statements by Hamas officials did not close the door finally to possible Hamas participation in the PA. How do you regard this?

[Yasin] The PA is a product of the Oslo and Cairo agreements that the Hamas has rejected. Hamas will not participate in this authority because its role is that of implementing agreements in which we do not believe and which we have rejected in principle. Only when the authority gains its full freedom, instead of doing the job of protecting Israel's security and implementing its schemes, will it be possible to reconsider this position.

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[AL-MUHARRIR] Some allege that the PLO needed over 20 years to join the project for a settlement, while Hamas is reaping the benefits of its military operations to enter the settlement from a position of strength. What is your answer to this thesis?

[Yasin] Hamas starts from a doctrine, not from a vacuum. This Islamic doctrine considers Palestine to be land of an Islamic waqf [religious trust] that no one, whether a leader or a generation of people, may sell or cede to others. They do not own it: it is the property of all generations of Muslims.

Hamas therefore does not see holy war as a means to attain power. It sees holy war as a means to liberate Palestine—all of Palestine. Muslims may not cease from holy war so long as the land of Muslims remains occupied, except in cases of truce with the enemy until sufficient strength for liberation is acquired.

[AL-MUHARRIR] May one say that Hamas's refusal to participate in self-rule elections based on the Oslo formula is final and absolute?

[Yasin] We will not participate in any of the self-rule institutions emanating from the Oslo and Cairo agreements, including the elections. Our position on this is decisive and final. They are a tool to implement agreements that we reject. As long as we reject them, how can we engage in implementing them? However, my opinion in the past has been that if an executive authority independent of the legislature and judiciary is formed, it would be possible in that case to enter legislative elections. They would not be for the executive authority, but for the representative of the Palestinian people, which in turn could proclaim the Palestinian people's view rejecting agreements that do not advance their rights and do not guarantee the Palestinian people's future regaining of their rights and the return of our people's emigrants and refugees to their homeland after its liberation.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Some think there is more than one orientation in Hamas. What is your opinion?

[Yasin] Hamas is an Islamic movement of resistance to Israeli occupation of our Palestinian land with the goal of regaining this land. Differences in individual theoretical outlook about any issue raised on the Palestinian scene can be considered a healthy phenomenon in the movement. It does not mean the existence of orientations and currents; for it is Islamic law that gathers and unifies, while compulsion divides and separates. So there is no harm when some brothers announce their views, which may be different from the views of others. However, everyone in the end is committed to the decision of the leadership and enlisted to implement it.

[AL-MUHARRIR] More than one Hamas official has released statements about the possible conclusion of a truce with Israel to stop mutual attacks on civilians. What is your opinion?

[Yasin] In Islam civilians are in principle outside the scope of war with the enemy. However the enemy's attacks on Palestinian civilians, collective punishments, expulsions, and destruction or locking of houses give the Islamic side the right to respond against civilians as the enemy does.

Therefore, agreeing to exclude civilians from the sphere of war is something that agrees with Islamic attitudes. The important thing is that the enemy pledge not to violate the rights of Palestinian civilians. If it does pledge, dialogue on excluding civilians from the sphere of war becomes possible.

[AL-MUHARRIR] Finally, despite the complications of the present stage, how do you see the Palestinian future?

[Yasin] Since its establishment and usurpation of Palestinian land, Israel has been trying to be part of the region and accepted in it. It will thereby have guaranteed what it seized for itself of Palestine. It will have guaranteed its security and prosperity and non-rejection by the Arab and Islamic peoples of the region. If Israel accomplishes this, it will have obtained everything. The Palestinians, on the other hand, will have lost everything. Their land will have been lost, and the Palestinian people will remain scattered without obtaining their land and home.

The most conspicuous proof of this is what Israel is doing today, giving Palestinians something to alleviate the burden and loss, while depriving them of their right to their homeland, their freedom, and their return.

For example, to get rid of the intifadah and the trouble it causes, Israel wants to turn over administration of Palestinian communities to the PA as its deputy. However, ceding land, removing settlements, and returning Jerusalem are things hard to attain because they do not serve Israel's interests and security.

In other words, everything that Israel wants and that benefits her before the world Israel concedes to the Palestinians. Everything that serves the Palestinians and guarantees that they regain their land, water, and freedom Israel retains to herself, so that it can remain the obeyed master who gives what he wants and forbids when he will.

Palestinian reality therefore is proceeding along a dark road whose end is known only to God. Our people must prepare themselves for more steadfastness. Let them arm themselves with patience and faith. Let them work to unite forces and frustrate the enemy scheme to kindle civil war among Palestinians. Civil war is a forbidden act that we must guard against with all our strength. God's help is ever to be sought. "God prevails in His purpose, but most men know not." [Koran 12:21].

On PA, Elections, Hamas Activities

JN2602190695 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Feb 95 p 5

[Interview with Hamas leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin "conducted by Jamal Khashuqji through Shaykh Yasin's prison inmates" in an Israeli jail; date not given]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Khashuqji] Is it possible for Hamas and the Palestinian Authority [PA] to coexist?

[Yasin] Coexistence with that authority is both possible and impossible. It is possible if the authorities do not act against the Islamic movement, do not serve the Jews in the first place, do not pave the way for the creation of a dictatorial one-party system, and if these authorities do not oppose operations carried out by the al-Qassam Battalions. It is, however, in the interest of the authority to get rid of the settlements and to restore the rest of the territories on which it wagered in the Oslo and Cairo agreements. But if the PA responds to the Jews' pressure to get rid of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], which the Jews' army and their force, as well as arrests, martyrdom, and blood, have failed to destroy, and if the PA opens fire on the Islamic forces, which have built bridges to Gaza, Jericho, and the West Bank, coexistence will become impossible because the PA will be an arm of the Israeli Army and its intelligence, and because we will, in this case, fight it fiercely just as we fight the Jews.

[Khashuqji] What about the idea of establishing an Islamic political party, and will such a party negatively affect Hamas and its performance?

[Yasin] I believe that the Islamic movement should not resist the changes around it. Instead, it should adjust to everything new that can preserve Hamas' force, growth, and spread. It is not desirable to establish a political party at this time because this is a time for jihad against the enemy. The establishment of that party needs an independent state, security, and stability so that efforts can center on the political aspect.

There is no room for the establishment of a political party while we are still under occupation. If we assume that the time is ripe for that, specialized committees will still have to be set up to study the positive and negative aspects of the creation of that party. It is study which will enable the leadership to take the appropriate decision.

[Khashuqji] The U.S. President has recently disclosed arrangements to besiege Hamas by preventing donations and monitoring it. How will this affect the movement?

[Yasin] Bill Clinton's statements cannot affect the sources of Hamas' funds unless God wants this. The movement depends on Islamic money all over the world as its source, and this money is not subject to the desire of this or that president or this or that state because the movement does not depend on states. Yet, international pressures may make it difficult for funds to be transported to the movement from abroad. Therefore, we rely on God and then on the members and supporters of the Islamic movement throughout the world, who are securing money for the movement instead of spending it on their own children because they have faith. The prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, said: "He who equips a fighter will be considered a fighter himself."

Militarily, I can say that it is easy for us to get weapons from our enemies and from their arms depots. As long as the members of the movement are ready to be martyred, nobody can stop their military action. He who seeks death is granted life, and jihad will go on until doomsday, God willing.

[Khashuqji] Do you expect the conflict to expand outside Palestine especially since the Israelis have hinted about this and are pressuring other countries to silence Hamas representatives or to deport them?

[Yasin] The expansion of the conflict is expected because anyone who has studied the history of the Zionist movement and the state of Israel sees that they carry the conflict to anywhere in the world without fear of anybody. This is because, according to their calculations, the opponent cannot retaliate and does not have the power to do so. Hence, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, must be prepared to powerfully retaliate to any Israeli attack abroad. The retaliation always takes place inside Palestine. This is better and more effective because if the Jews realize that they will pay a dear price, then they will refrain from any outside escalation. I will give you an example:

The Tel Aviv operation frightened and bewildered the Jews. Even though they had refused to even recognize the existence of Hamas, the Jews began to talk about the possibilities of a dialogue with it. This is because they know that repeating such a martyrdom-seeking operation or any abduction operations will lead to the fall of their government a right wing takeover of power in Israel, which is something the Labor Party will not accept or would not like to fall into. Therefore, they are ready to do anything to stop such jihad and martyrdom-seeking operations which threaten their state and their government.

[Khashuqji] The peace process is going on in the region. What exactly do you fear and what do you think Israel wants from this process, especially in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon?

[Yasin] With this settlement, Israel wants to tear down the wall of hostility coming from the Arab countries on the eastern front. This is after the wall of hostility with Egypt has been torn down through the Camp David treaty. Hence, Israel would tear down the wall of hostility with Arab countries, singling out one country after another. Through this, Israel would reinforce its presence in the heart of the Arab nation and would be accepted after years of being alien and unwanted. Moreover, through this, Israel would open a bridge or a passage for itself to the Arabian Peninsula, the Gulf, and Iraq. It would also make Jordan a passage for the flowing Israeli economy, Israeli industry, and Zionist influence to these areas. By doing so, Israel would achieve Israeli hegemony over the Arab nation's resources under the slogan of developing the Middle East through joint projects and Jewish capital from all over the world and would open the doors for Israeli intelligence to infiltrate

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into Arab countries, corrupting and sowing the seeds of division and sedition among the countries of the Arab nation and scaring each one of the other. Israel would also plant an army of agents in the service of Israel. Perhaps we, the Palestinians, are aware of the danger of these agents, their corruption, and their sowing of the seeds of sedition and division in the Palestinian society.

[Khashuqji] What is your comment on the role of the PA in the kidnapping of Israeli soldier Nahshon Waxman?

[Yasin] Regarding the kidnapping of the Israeli soldier at the hands of the mujahidin in the victorious 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, the PA informed Israel of the place of the kidnappers when it revealed the identity of the person who carried the videotape to the Gaza Strip. Thus, the PA has become an arm of the Israeli intelligence service and Army because it fought to safeguard Israel's security more than Palestinian security. The Gaza massacre on Friday, 18 November 1994, confirmed what we have said. In this massacre, 13 martyrs fell and approximately 200 persons were wounded. All this aimed at proving that 'Arafat is capable of controlling the Palestinian people and that he is qualified to work with Israel toward implementing the rest of the agreement and its articles. Thus, the donor states and Israel moved quickly to pay the money due to the PA as a reward for the massacre and to support its power and stability now that they have found that land is being shaken under the foot of the PA, that the agreement is at stake, and that the support for it is decreasing.

[Khashuqji] What do you think of the self-rule elections?

[Yasin] The self-rule is considered an implementation of the Oslo and Cairo accords, which are rejected by the Islamic movement. Therefore, any elections in the self-rule areas to find a ruling authority through which they will replace Israel in running the occupied territory and implementing the agreements will be viewed as we declared.

[Khashuqji] Some observers wager that Hamas will join the PA after a few years. What is your comment on this?

[Yasin] Those who wager on this do not understand the meaning of the doctrine of Hamas, which it calls on people to follow and which it is committed to implement. When those people understand the Islamists they will change their stand because our stand on the self-rule is firm as we noted earlier. When the occupied territories come fully under the control of the Palestinians and when a real Palestinian state emerges on which nobody dictates terms and which does not safeguard the security of the Israelis or defend the existence of the usurper of the Palestinian territory we will have another view regarding this state because we are part of the people in this homeland. We differ with others with regard to the homeland because we want an Islamic state while others want a secular state that does not abide by the Islamic laws, order, or doctrine. [passage omitted]

Hamas Refuses To Recognize National Dialogue Committee

TA2702120995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Feb p A4

[Report by 'Amira Hess]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] yesterday declared that it refused to recognize the national dialogue committee formed by the PLO Executive Committee.

Hamas for the first time explicitly declared that holding a real dialogue would only become possible after the Palestinian Authority [PA] admitted that the Oslo agreement had failed and announced that the agreement was null and void.

At the PA meeting on 25 February, Yasir 'Arafat declared that he would head the National Dialogue Committee, the establishment of which was decided upon in Cairo. The committee was entrusted with maintaining national unity. Hamas announced that the PLO's call was meaningless, stating that the Executive Committee's decision was just "another decision made by the PA chairman in order to evade responsibility for the political and social deadlock he and the weak PA now find themselves in."

Justice Minister on Role of Democracy in PA

95AA0070B London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 11 Dec 94 p 38

[FBIS Translated Text] Furayh Abu-Middayn, the justice minister in the Palestinian Authority [PA], says that the democratic attitude in the authority is present and deep-rooted, but that it has not been applied on the ground at present due to practical considerations and because it requires legislation in step with the transition from multiple occupations to "this thing that is still an infant crawling." He says that the task of the PA now is to attain a democratic way of acting based on law.

The Palestinian justice minister told us: "After 27 years of occupation, the problem is not just one of laws and legislation, but treating the effects of a series of consecutive occupations; for in Palestine now there is no Palestinian law, so much as there are laws in effect in Palestine established by a series of foreign occupations. These include 1,200 Israeli military orders to restrict the daily life of Palestinians in its economic and political aspects and in those aspects that set a democratic path in people's lives. Thus the Gaza Strip has never engaged in an election process in its entire history. To this moment no Palestinian legal text has been drawn up by a Palestinian hand for Palestinian purposes, except for the Constitution drawn up in 1962 by the Legislative Assembly in the Gaza Strip whose head was Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi. The Legislative Assembly approved the law as a Palestinian law, and 'Abd-al-Nasir helped this trend in the decade of the pan-Arab tide."

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The Palestinian justice minister only has reservations about the proposed Palestinian Constitution drafted under the supervision of Dr. Anis al-Qasim. He calls for adopting the constitution that the Palestinian Legislative Council laid down in 1962, a constitution that he considers the height of legislation. He told us: "The 1962 Constitution in my opinion was very advanced. It included personal freedom and equality between men and women. It defined administrative formations and separated powers. It contained major fundamental principles. Despite the advanced nature of the mandate-established constitution by the standards of the period, the constitution of the Palestinian Legislative Assembly was even more advanced. How was something strong and coherent replaced by something else? I have reservations—indeed, I reject—Anis al-Qasim's draft constitution first because the Oslo and Cairo agreements restrict the PA—for example, in legislation regarding electricity consumption in the Gaza Strip."

Abu-Middayn's reservations also spring from the fact that serious thought must be given to the final constitution of the Palestinian state after conditions stabilize regarding the political shape, character, and personality it will have—whether it is to be a presidential system, or a monarchy in the event of confederation with Jordan. He adds: "Why the haste toward this amorphous constitutional situation that cannot be coherent? Israel, which claims to be a democracy, has no constitution. True, it has its parliament, but it has hesitated to enact a constitution for reasons related to its expansionist ambitions and reluctance to draw its permanent borders."

The Palestinian justice minister therefore thinks that the PA should pass legislation that has the character of everyday democracy, as he calls it, for the daily dealings between the people and the authority. It should leave enacting the fundamental laws relating to sovereignty and borders to the future. Abu-Middayn suggests that the priority in legislation, which should have a permanent character, should focus on the economy: currency, banks, foreign companies, multinational corporations, an economic open door, and investment laws.

Voice of Palestine Radio Operations Reported

TA2702110695 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM TIMES in English 24 Feb 95 p 8

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Voice of Palestine began broadcasting from Jericho as soon as the Palestinian National Authority took over the autonomous areas in Gaza and Jericho. After long years of transmitting from abroad, the Voice of Palestine changed from inciter against Israel into a voice of peace-building and peace-making with the Jewish state.

The radio is considered the official broadcaster of the PNA [Palestinian National Authority].

The first Palestinian radio station started broadcasting from Cairo July 11, 1968, and featured nationalist songs, calls to fight the Israeli occupier and secret military messages. Now under the Palestinian National Authority in the self-rule areas, it has been transformed into an Arab station broadcasting music and programs that deal with daily issues of the residents; a station that suits the new peace phase.

On the roof of the small buidling in Jericho there is a sign that reads, PNA, the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation, flanked by the Palestinian flag. Two Palestinian policemen are guarding the building searching visitors entering or leaving.

Yusuf Qazzaz, editor-in-chief of the Voice of Palestine, said, "We are still at the beginning of the road and we need to exert a lot of effort... We make mistakes from time to time and we are treated mercilessly, but we are moving on, and this is important."

The Voice of Palestine has five rooms, two of which are used as studios.

Basim Abu-Rassmiyyah, director of the radio station, said, "We are working under limited financial and technical resources. We have created a radio station from nothing and worked for four months without receiving wages."

He added, "The radio is a seven-month old institution and we have managed so far, although we are still using old equipment given us from Germany."

Abu-Rasmiyyah emphasized the need for sophisticated equipment to run the radio for 18 hours a day.

He confirmed that there is no censorship of any kind, not Arab, Palestinian or Israeli. However, he added, we work according to a national criteria avoiding news that can incite and create problems. [passage omitted]

Article Outlines TV Operations, Schedules

TA2702110495 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM TIMES in English 24 Feb 95 p 9

[Report by Kawthar Salam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Yasir 'Arafat has issued a directive to award financial remuneration to encourage those who work in the field of Palestinian TV in the Gaza Strip.

The coordinator general of Palestine Broadcasting Corporation [PBC] Hisham Maki, said that Palestinian TV has been operating during Ramadan from 2 p.m. to 4 a.m. [1200-0200 GMT].

During this time, it has presented a variety of cultural and religious programs; news bulletins in Arabic and English; varieties; and mini-series in Arabic. Maki said that he expects a relay station to be acquired soon in the eastern area of Abasan and Bani-Suhaylah, and in the northern area of Bayt Lahiyah.

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He added that after Ramadan, TV broadcasts will begin at 3 p.m. [1300 GMT] and will continue past midnight. He said part of the broadcast will be educational geared towards high school students in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The educational programming will be presented by Zaynab al-Wazir.

Maki added that many local programs have been recorded, using our Outside Broadcasting truck for broadcasting from the field. He said the technical part was supervised by engineer Muhammad Saqir, the head of PBC's engineering department in the Gaza Strip.

Game and quiz shows are among the programs the PBC division in Gaza has prepared. There will also be a weekly news show called "Tonight," prepared and presented by Marwan Kanafani. Another is called "The Other Side" presented by Iman Sharif. Other programs will include programs on health.

Particular attention will be given to a program entitled "From Zero Up To The Summit," which will deal with the problems of infrastructure in the Gaza Strip. This program, directed by Jar Lafi, is presented by Inas Tawil.

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Algeria

President Issues Statement on Course of Consultations

LD2702201295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] An explanatory statement was released by the president's office this evening on the course of the consultations that the head of state began on 14 February, immediately after the deadline set by him for political parties, associations, and national figures to reply to the memorandum on the technical aspects of the presidential elections, and other issues concerning the elections.

In today's statement, it is recalled that the head of state has to date received 28 national figures. Their names were mentioned in the national media after each meeting. [passage omitted]

The head of state told the national figures with whom he spoke that the replies and stances of the parties were given clearly, thanks to the transparency of the dialogue, including the replies of the leaders of those responsible for the violence and those who refused to contribute toward ending the violence. It is the Algerian people who have been the victims of the violence, according to the statement.

The head of state reminded those with whom he spoke that Algeria has decided to hold presidential elections, because it cannot remain in chronic political crisis. He stressed that to return to the people is a fundamental basis of the democracy that everyone has called for.

As its eighth point, out of the many points it includes, the presidential statement stresses that, from the stances put forward by the national figures, it has been concluded that a large section of them support the holding of presidential elections and that there is wide agreement on the endeavor proposed in the presidential memorandum. [passage omitted]

On the issue of violence, the head of state stressed the Algerian people's determination to elect their president. He also stressed that the presidential elections are a measure and an action to undermine and restrict the threats of violence. He said that the elections will be a necessary challenge.

Regarding dialogue, the head of state stressed again the efforts that are being made to promote dialogue. [passage omitted]

Those figures who favor reaching a political agreement before presidential elections justified their stance on the grounds that the state must seek an end to violence first, and that presidential elections will come as a result of a political consensus. These figures stressed that dialogue is the only way to end the crisis, with the participation of all the parties, including the legitimate leadership of the dissolved party [Islamic Salvation Front].

In this context, what is defined as the national contract—the political document drawn up at the Rome meeting—was regarded by these figures as an important step forward in the dialogue . These figures stated that the security endeavor will not resolve the problem of violence but will make it more complicated.

In reply to these stances, the head of state stressed that he has never said that the elections are seen as a solution to all the problems, and that he has never said that national dialogue and concord are not the best way to overcome the current crisis. On the contrary, the head of state declared that for three years national dialogue has been occupying a prominent position which it did not have previously. [passage omitted]

The head of state said that those who claim that the state does not want dialogue are not being objective. He stressed that, whenever dialogue has been reactivated, some parties have redoubled conditions and obstacles, while others have refused to come to the negotiating table. [passage omitted]

He added that, if the matter is about promoting democracy, the Algerian people must be given the opportunity to make their choice. If the matter is about a crisis of power or legitimacy, there is nothing more appropriate than elections. However, the matter is about threats by terrorists and forces that are hostile to the whole people, and there is no other way to confront that except by fighting against the threat.

The head of state said that Algeria has previously paid a high price for easy solutions, and we cannot persist on that path.

Liamine Zeroual stressed that endeavors relating to presidential elections should not be construed as a rejection of dialogue. We must, however, have the courage to discuss all the problems objectively, he stated.

The head of state stressed that the officials and the people reject the solutions sponsored by foreign parties. He emphasized again that those who really want to contribute toward promoting national concord and reconciliation should make their efforts here in Algeria and among Algerians.

The statement concludes by saying that the head of state will embark on other consultations following his consultations with national figures. These will be with political parties, organizations, and associations that have been sent a memorandum on the election law and other aspects of the presidential elections.

Minister on Security Measures in Ports, Airports

LD2502231195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 2200 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Security in airports and ports is an issue of concern to the Transport Ministry. New equipment has been installed at Oran airport, which

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Transport Minister Mohamed Arezki Isli visited today. Our correspondent Aicha Saidi reports:

[Begin Saidi recording] The security system includes four scanners and eight security gates, which have been operational for a week now. However, there have been conflicts between the various employees working in ports and airports. This is why new structures are going to be set up. They are the Security Committee for Ports and Airports.... [pauses] The Port Authorities [autorite portuaire] which will have public authority [mission de puissance publique], and, first and foremost, a single command in order to optimize the security and profitability of economic activities. The port of Oran, which has just been equipped with a container terminal, is now the first port in the country thanks to the increase in its activities and growth. [end recording]

Equipment is not enough: Men must also play their part. This is what the transport minister said to Aicha Saidi:

[Begin Isli recording] We should not believe that the solution to security in ports and airports is only an equipment issue. It depends first on men: their training, their awareness and, unfortunately—and this must be said and stressed—their selection.

In this respect, we have decided to set up a single security command for each airport and each port. Thanks to this single command formula, I hope—we hope—we will find the solution to all the issues of misunderstanding, coordination, and discipline that have always prevented the smooth running of these committees. [end recording]

It must be pointed out that a new organization for security in ports and airports—the minister has just announced this—will be set up before the end of the first part of 1995.

Officials Inform Families of Dead in Prison Riot

LD2702140695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The public prosecution at the Algiers judicial council has stressed, with regard to informing the families of the dead, that on the day after the incidents caused by terrorist prisoners at the Serkadji prison it had provided official and confirmed figures of the number of people killed or injured during the mutiny, the escape attempt, or while the security forces were restoring calm and discipline in the institution.

The public prosecution would like to report that the families of these people that the prison administration had sent cables notifying the families of the dead and injured in each case, in accordance with the law. Furthermore, the public prosecution had also notified the lawyers in each case in the form dictated by the laws that are in force.

Zeroual Receives Former Prime Minister

LD2602173495 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Head of State Liamine Zeroual continues to receive prominent personalities. President Liamine Zeroual received today at the presidency Former Prime Minister Belaid Abdessalam, Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui, and Lakhdar Bentobal.

These meetings falls within the consultations regarding the review of the electoral law and the political aspects connected to the presidential elections.

Egypt

Reportage, Commentaries on NPT Disute With Israel

Musa on Israeli Proposal, Iraq

NC2702161695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1430 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that Israel's idea on establishing a regional organization to limit nuclear arms in the region to replace the International Atomic Energy Agency is still mere talk. He said that we have not yet investigated the details of this idea in Egyptian-Israeli negotiations. In a statement to the weekly magazine MAYU, published by the ruling National Democratic Party, he said that the date of the next meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has not been set.

On the attempts to lift the blockade on Iraq, Musa said that the Security Council resolutions must be implemented and that efforts must be made to assist the Iraqi people in these difficult times as long as the Security Council resolutions permit some measures regarding medicine, food, etc., on humanitarian grounds. He said that it is important to help the Iraqi people at this stage. Regarding the Security Council resolutions and sanctions against Iraq, he said that they are definitely not limitless and expressed his hope that circumstances would allow these resolutions to be reconsidered in the near future.

U.S. Stance Termed 'Conspiracy'

NC2802103195 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 22 Feb 95 p 8

[The "Close-Up" column: "Christopher Does Not Speak" by Salamah Ahmad Salamah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Obviously Israel's concept of peace is based on a strategic bet with specific blueprints and well-planned goals. The details of this concept are emerging daily. In an article published in the NEW YORK TIMES by pro-Israeli writer Thomas Friedman, to which I referred yesterday, it is clear that peace in the region, as Israel envisions it, is based on the assumption that the role played by Egypt in the Arab world will end with the end of the peace process; that Israel, in view of its technological and economic superiority and its special relations with the United States, would be the most capable, through direct contacts with the Arab countries,

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of playing a pioneering role in the region; and that Egypt should look for a new role, that is, to play away from Israel.

This is why Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres claimed that the furor that Foreign Minister Musa raised over Israel's unilateral possession of nuclear weapons would "destroy" the peace process. Israel is currently playing up this notion. It is trying to put the peace process on one side of the scales and pressure on Egypt to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty on the other. It wants to convince the world that it cannot continue with the peace process unless it guarantees its security by retaining its nuclear weapons.

Israel's illusions about leading and dominating the region may go too far and outside the framework of the peace process. But this may not be so bad. What is more worrying and frightening is the spineless and vague stance the United States adopts on the issue of Israel's nuclear arms. It is a stance characterized by irresponsibility and blind bias toward Israel.

The United States, which champions the world's call to end nuclear proliferation and is exerting enormous efforts to freeze North Korea's nuclear program, raising a hue and cry over Iran's obtaining a nuclear plant for peaceful purposes from Russia, and pressuring Egypt and the Arab countries to agree to extend the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, adopts a totally neutral and silent stance on Israel's nuclear power. Christopher did not try to spell out a view, not even a view, on the ongoing dispute between Egypt and Israel over this issue, to at least show concern for the stability of peace in the Middle East. This clearly means that the Israeli illusions rely on tacit U.S. backing regarding both Israel's nuclear arms and its ambitions to lead the Middle East. This U.S. neutrality on this issue in particular is but an exposed conspiracy for which the Arabs will pay the price.

Paper Criticizes Israel's Stance

NC2802121395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1045 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I urges Israeli politicians and leaders—right-wing or left-wing, civilian or military—to stop jesting on serious issues or to realize that if Israel wants to turn the world into a jungle, it will not be the strongest beast there. The paper emphasizes that Israel is handling the nuclear weapons issue lightly, scornfully, transcendently, and through worthless and incomplete stances.

In its editorial today, the paper says Israel is trying to portray the issue as a bilateral disagreement with Egypt while it is a completely different matter. Israel's exclusive possession of nuclear weapons in the Middle East concerns all the region's countries and Egypt is most concerned for purely environmental reasons because of the Israeli nuclear installations' proximity to the Egyptian border.

The paper notes that Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty is part of its usual behavior in violating and circumventing international law. It says that there is no excuse for excluding Israel from the signing.

The paper says Israeli reactions to the possibility of inspecting any of its atomic sites reveal an odious superiority complex because it portrays us as people shuddering with fear from the Israeli nuclear bomb while this is not true.

Concluding its editorial, the paper affirms Egypt's concern to establish a genuine, lasting, and just peace in the region and to stop the arms race so the region's nations can have time for reconstruction and economic development.

Diplomat: Peace Talks, Not NPT, Problem

TA2602113195 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Feb 95 p 2

[Report by Jon Immanuel in Cairo]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The tension in Israeli-Egyptian relations stems from Israel's approach to the peace process with Palestinians more than from its refusal to sign the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty [NPT], according to a veteran Egyptian diplomat. Tahsin Bashir, former deputy chairman of the Arab League, said in an interview last week with THE JERUSALEM POST that he would trade off bombs for settlements.

"I would be tolerant towards Israel for 30 years, allowing it to keep 30 bombs if it liquidated 30 settlements. I think settlements and people are more explosive in the short run, than the nuclear issue." Foreign reports estimate Israel has some 100 nuclear warheads.

Bashir scored Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin for hesitancy over the peace process and creating "bad static" in communications with Egypt.

He said Menahem Begin showed more courage than Rabin in paying the price of peace because he agreed to remove Sinai settlements, while Rabin "jumped at the Oslo Agreement essentially because it postponed the (matter of the) settlements."

Bashir said Egyptians believe Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres "started having illusions that you can make peace with the Arab states without having peace with the Palestinians."

Instead of praising Oslo as an Israeli-initiated breakthrough, he feels Rabin is "playing politics as usual" where "building peace means building structural change."

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He supported the view that the final settlement with the Palestinians should be negotiated now.

The problem for Israeli-Egyptian relations in the current crawl towards an interim settlement is that "we are both hinged to peace but we do not have a common view of the future of the area."

According to Bashir, Egypt wants a regional strategy to be the basis of Israel's integration and not bilateral talks.

Egypt therefore is discouraging the normalization of ties with Israel by Arab states until Israel joins the NPT and withdraws to its final borders, both issues of regional importance to Egypt.

Bashir's trade-off strategy, exchanging Israel's right to keep bombs if it gives up settlements is part of a regional approach to solving problems.

Until now these were dealt with in a bilateral way, which frequently leads to deadlock, for want of alternative options.

He offered another way to resolve the "stumbling block" of settlements, following the example of the Israeli-Jordanian agreement.

"You can exchange territory in which settlers are located, for equivalent Israeli territory, or lease back territory. That removes the either-or," he said. "That's the whole idea of peace."

Official Wants NPT Validity Extended

BR2402154295 Paris LE FIGARO in French 24 Feb 95 p 3

[Article by special correspondent Claude Lorieux: "Israel-Egypt: the Deadlock"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo—[passage omitted] "We would like the validity of the treaty to be extended and for the region to be freed from weapons of mass destruction," Usumah al-Baz, political counselor to President Husni Mubarak, told LE FIGARO, before adding: "Israel says that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons, but that does not stop it from using them, if the case arises, as a means of pressure on its neighbors."

Mr. al-Baz underlines that Egypt has not arbitrarily decided to raise the question of renewal of the NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty]. "When we signed it in June 1968," he recalls, "we were not at peace with Israel, and we could then have spoken of Israel's nuclear potential."

Paper: Israel's Stance May Cause Arms Race

NC2602081295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0718 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—AL-AHRAM says Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' statement that Egypt pledged to re-sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] is part of Israel's elusive position regarding the removal of weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East.

In an editorial in today's issue, the paper says Israel's logic is twisted: While it is demanding that its ready-to-use nuclear stockpile be kept until peace is achieved, it is deliberately freezing peace negotiations on the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks and making threats and warnings against the Arab countries.

The paper stresses that the tension in the region and the deadlock at the negotiations is due to Israel's maneuvers and its attempt to behave as if it were a superpower in the Middle East, which is unacceptable.

AL-AHRAM expresses the belief that this method may push the region toward a new cycle of the arms race that will not be in Israel's interest in the long run.

Paper: 'Suitable' NPT 'Formula' Sought

NC2602120095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1102 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Feb (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I today emphasizes Egypt's firm and clear stance on signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. It points out that Egypt was not engaging in mere tactics when it declared right from the first moment when the issue was raised that it would not accept an indefinite or long-term extension of the treaty unless Israel develops its currently negative attitude and moves toward a formula that Egypt feels is suitable.

In an article by its chief editor Mursi 'Atallah, the newspaper says that when some Egyptian officials submit some ideas, initiatives, or interpretations of existing options that might help to solve the problem and attain the desired formula, it does not equal a retreat on the part of the country. He adds that Egypt is able to distinguish between strategic principles, over which bargaining is not possible, and procedural and tactical methods that leave enough room to reconcile Egypt's legitimate demands to Israel's convoluted claims.

The paper affirms that there is consensus among the country's various political forces and parties to back the Egyptian leadership's position on this fateful issue. It notes that this consensus is a healthy sign of the soundness of the country's democratic structure.

AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I notes that there are, however, red lines that must not be crossed and there are issues and affairs that cannot be subjected to bargaining, notably the issue of Egypt's present and future national security.

Renewed Talks Fail To Break 'Impasse'

MM2702084295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Feb 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Huda al-Husayni: "Musa: I Want To Visit Dimona; Peres: It Is a Very Serious Matter"]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London—Because of Egypt's firm position of refusing to sign the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], there are reports of a proposed way out of this crisis, namely that the renewal be for a specific period instead of an indefinite renewal, as decided, which requires 86 states to sign.

The United States has not so far managed to bring together this number of states. And Egypt and Israel have failed to achieve progress vis-a-vis their positions on the NPT, despite the meetings that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has held with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

The impasse reached at the meeting held between Peres and Musa led to the cancellation of a meeting scheduled for last Thursday between Peres and Mubarak. At their joint news conference Peres and Musa did not conceal the failure to achieve any progress regarding the main problem. It became clear that the two states did not agree on the need to set a clear timetable obliging Israel to sign the NPT once a comprehensive peace is signed. [passage omitted]

At the Peres-Musa meeting the Egyptian minister asked—for the third time—to visit the Dimona reactor. He asked Peres why he objects to this, so Peres replied: "Because you will see nothing there—which means the end of our deterrent."

At the first meeting between them last week 'Amr Musa asked Peres: "Would you object if I asked to visit Dimona?" Peres replied: "That is very serious." Musa asked why. Peres replied: "And what would happen if you visited Dimona and discovered that there was nothing there? You would immediately sabotage our entire deterrent force."

When Peres repeated this conversation to those accompanying him, he added: "Of course, I was joking." [passage omitted]

Sentry Guarding Church Said Killed by Mistake

NC2702183195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1652 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—A soldier from the Suhaj security forces was killed today as a bullet was fired by mistake from the rifle of a fellow soldier. A responsible security source said that while soldier Sayyid Muhammad Hasan from the Suhaj security forces was on duty guarding the Virgin Mary Church in Jirja, a bullet went off by mistake from his automatic rifle, hitting his comrade Mahmud Muhammad Mustafa, who was also assigned to guard the church, killing him instantly.

Child Hurt in Crossfire Between Police, Assailants

NC2802071295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2235 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—A responsible security source at the Interior Ministry has stated that a four-year-old girl was wounded today when unidentified assailants opened fire at policemen from Mallawi Police Station in Upper Egypt and fled.

The source pointed out that the assailants started firing at a police patrol led by First Lieutenant Mahmud Yahya. The patrol members returned fire. Shahindah Taha Anwar Shihatah, who was walking with her father in the area, was wounded and taken immediately to the hospital for treatment. The assailants escaped to nearby fields. Security teams went to the scene and are trying to apprehend the attackers. The prosecutor has been tasked to begin an investigation.

Mubarak Dines With Army Units, Discusses Developments

NC2702191995 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Husni Mubarak today had a Ramadan fast-breaking meal with the commands of the Second and Third Field Armies at the headquarters of the Second Field Army at the al- Jala' Camp in Ismailia. He met with the commanders of the main branches of the armed forces and the commands of the Second and Third Field Armies and the commanders of their formations.

President Mubarak responded to the questions of the commanders of military formations on the current situation and on Egypt's stance on several issues, such as the stance on linking the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to Israel's signing. He also explained the circumstances and results of the tripartite summit in Alexandria and the topics discussed, primarily supporting the process of a fair and comprehensive peace and the role of the Arab nation as the home of all Arabs. He also explained Egypt's efforts to clear the Arab air and the difficulties facing these efforts. He stressed Egypt's positive response to the Arab brothers when called to bring views closer on their differences.

President Mubarak also discussed the peace process on the Syrian, Lebanese, Palestinian, and Jordanian tracks. He explained the issue of national pan-Arab security under the current Arab situation and regional and international developments. He also discussed the situation between Egypt and Sudan and the efforts made by certain Arab leaders on the sidelines of the Islamic summit to bring about a meeting between him and the Sudanese president and the reason for his refusal to meet with him. He also touched on the difficult political and economic situation that the Sudanese people are encountering under the current ruling regime.

President Mubarak answered a question on Egypt's joining the Arab Maghreb Union. He stressed that Egypt is playing a pioneering role in orchestrating the efforts to bring about peace and stability in the region.

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Ugandan Foreign Minister Arrives for Visit

NC2702182495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1720 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Feb (MENA)—Ugandan Foreign Minister Ruhakana Rugunda [name and title as received] arrived in Cairo this evening on a visit to Egypt lasting several days. Rugunda is carrying a message from Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to President Husni Mubarak.

Mubarak Meets Ugandan Ministers

NC2802093995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0900 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Ugandan Foreign Minister Ruhakana Rugunda and Trade and Industry Minister Richard Kaijuka in the Presidential Office this morning.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Ugandan Ambassador in Cairo Henri Obou attended the meeting.

Mubarak Receives Message

NC2802111295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak today received a message from Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni dealing with bilateral relations.

After meeting President Mubarak in the company of the Ugandan trade minister, Ugandan Foreign Minister Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda said they reviewed regional and world issues of common interest and bilateral relations.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the meeting and said the delegates discussed the agenda of the African ministerial conference to be held in Cairo in late March to look into Africa's economic and social conditions.

Ugandan Ministers Leave Cairo

NC2802112595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1030 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Feb (MENA)—The Ugandan foreign and trade ministers left Cairo this morning after a one-day visit to Egypt. During their stay they handed a written message to President Husni Mubarak from Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and held talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

Libya

Ministry: 'Arafat Has No Right To Call For Arab Summit

LD2402164895 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1530 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] 24 Feb (JANA)—A source at the General People's Committee for Unity commented on Yasir 'Arafat's announcement that he will seek the convocation of an Arab summit following the failure of his latest meeting with terrorist Shim'on Peres, foreign minister of the enemy Israel. The source said: We are astonished at 'Arafat's call for an Arab summit, particularly at this moment when Arabs are not responsible for his negotiations with the Israeli terrorists in Oslo and for his agreement of the so- called Gaza-Jericho accord, in which he recognized the enemy and renounced the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

The source pointed out that 'Arafat's call for this summit was made in order to cover up his failure to gain anything for the Palestinian people. 'Arafat did not seek permission from an Arab summit to go to Oslo, and therefore no Arab summit is responsible for his failure and the impasse in which he has found himself. Hence, 'Arafat should alone shoulder responsibility for his failure, as Arabs had nothing to do with his decision, the source added.

The source concluded his comment saying: "An Arab summit will not have jurisdiction on this matter. No Arab summit has encouraged 'Arafat to make his capitulationist decision and renounce the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people; therefore, he has no right to seek the convocation of an Arab summit that will be used as venue to cover up for his failures."

Arab Libyan-Algerian Talks Begin in Tripoli

LD2602143095 Tripoli JANA in English 1411 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Al Nowar 26, Jamahirya News Agency—The Arab Libyan-Algerian talks to follow up the implementation of the decisions of the Arab Libyan Algerian joint higher committee began yesterday in Tripoli.

Present at the talks were the secretary general of the General People's Committee for Unity and Abdelkader Taffar, the secretary general of the Algerian Foreign Ministry, as well as the Algerian ambassador to the Great Jamahirya and the secretary of the Libyan Arab brotherhood bureau to sisterly Algeria.

The secretary general of the General People's Committee for Unity made a speech welcoming Abdelkader Taffar and the delegation in his company.

He said today we are meeting to follow up cooperation activities of the Arab Libyan Algerian joint higher committee's decisions and recommendations which have so far been implemented so as to enhance cooperation for the benefit of the Arab people in the two sisterly countries.

He stressed the need to work together to developing the Arab Maghreb union enabling it to meet the challenges and play its role in an Arab environment for the benfit of the Arab citizen in this part of the greater Arab homeland in a manner which may enhance the unity process of the Arab nation.

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Also Abdelkader Taffar made a speech in which he pointed out we are holding this meeting within the framework of the consultation machinery which had been set up to be the framework for consultation and exchanging viewpoints on issues of common interest in our Maghreb, Arab and international context.

He stressed this method of coordination will permit us to coordinate our stances for the benefit of the common interst of out two sisterly countries.

He said in today's world, there is no place for the weak and solitary action is useless. Accordingly, we are required to intensify our efforts, develop our cooperation and endeavour to achieve further complementarity steps in various fields.

The committee is discussing a number of items on its agenda including consultation, cooperation, the reviewing and evaluation of the execution of the Arab Libyan Algerian joint higher committee's decisions and directions and the necessary ways to implement them.

JANA Editor on Israel's Refusal To Sign NPT

LD2502155795 Tripoli JANA in English 1423 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, an Nawar [February] 25, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—It was announced in Cairo on Thursday night that the meeting held on Thursday between 'Amr Musa, the Egyptian foreign minister, and terrorist Peres, the foreign minister of the Israeli enemy, had failed to reach an agreement on the dispute concerning the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] and the enemy's possession of a huge arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

Observers noted that the failure had reflected the Israeli enemy's determination to reject the signing of the nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty and showed the ferocious efforts by the enemy to posses all types of weapons of mass destruction which will never cease until the Israeli enemy achieves its plan for the destruction of the Arab nation.

JANA's editor for Arab affairs commented on this. He stressed "the hostile tendency of the Israeli enemy towards the Arab nation has became blatantly clear and exposed and the terrorist policy is well entrenched in Israeli politics and behaviour. The Israeli plan will not cease to endeavour to destroy, with their nuclear bombs, Egypt and the Arab nation. This enemy is aware that Egypt is the biggest Arab country. Also the fierce interest in the Egyptian stance rejecting to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty unless the Israeli enemy signs it shows that the enemy is determined to destroy Egypt and that it will not retreat from implementing its plans until it is able to eliminate the Arab nation.

The editor added once again the Israeli enemy showed beyond any doubt its total defiance of the international community will and ridiculing the stances of all countries which call for an end to the production of the weapons of mass destruction. This proves that the intransigence of the Israelis will have no limits and that their determination to stock-pile weapons of mass destruction in occupied Palestine will not stop. Hence, this gives us the justification and right before the whole world, which witnesses the Israeli intransigence, to possess we Arabs means to defend ourselves [sentence as received]. Furthermore this intransigence [word indistinct] up all justifications to deprive others of possessing the means which may enable them to defend themselves.

The editor pointed out while we register our condemnation of the Israeli enemy's persistent disregard for the will of the international community, we thank it for providing us with justification and right so that we can be ready to defend ourselves for we cannot live under the threat of the Israeli nuclear umbrella.

The editor asserted that America made big fuss when the Great Jamahiriyah merely established civilian installation in the Great Jamahiriyah for the production of medicines at al-Rabitah. America waged a relentless malicious for which it mobilized the Western mass media in a bid to mislead the world's public opinion about the objectives of this installation which had been visited by delegations from all over the world and saw closely that it was a civilian installations. Now, the Americans have no right to continue this malicious campaign after this Israeli terrorist intransigence.

The editor said also now the chasing of Iraq and the exerting of pressure on Baghdad should stop after this persistent Israeli determination to defy the will of the international community. And if America and the international are blaming Iraq for the occupation of Kuwait which Iraq has recognized it and its borders, the Israeli enemy continues to occupy Arab lands in Palestine, Lebanon, the Golan and others.

The editor added "the Israeli enemy made the Arab region live in permanent fear and the people of the Arab nation wake up and sleep on the fear of the nuclear terror which the Israeli enemy possess. The region is living in a permanent danger as a result of the Israeli enemy's stock piling of nuclear weapons in occupied Palestine."

The editor stressed that this enemy should be the first to be disarmed of all types of weapons for the nuclear endeavours which became the main policy of the enemy shows that this enemy can only live on war.

JANA's editor for Arab affairs warn the Arab nation that the Israeli tendency to possess deadly weapons comes within the framework of the Western colonialist crusader plan to spread its total control over the Arab nation and its resources and that this plan which is not different to past hate driven crusader onslaught against this nation throughout his history and that this requires the Arab masses to be cautious of this dangerous plan and to be

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ready for the inevitable confrontation to defend our nation in the face of the dangers threatening it.

Morocco

Filali Presents New Cabinet to King Hassan

LD2702235195 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Hassan II, accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed and His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid, received Abdellatif Filali, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs and cooperation, at the royal palace in Rabat this evening. Mr. Filali introduced to his majesty the members of the new government, which is composed as follows:

Moulay Ahmed Alaoui	minister of state
Driss Basri	minister of state for the interior
Abderrahmane Amalou	minister of justice
Mohamed Kabbaj	minister of finance and foreign investments
Hassan Abou Ayoub	minister of agriculture and agricultural investments
Mustapha Sahel	minister of fisheries and the merchant navy
Abdelaziz Meziane Belfkih	minister of public works
Driss Alaoui M'Daghri	minister of communications and official government spokesman
Driss Jettou	minister of trade, industry, and handicrafts
Abdelkebir M'Daghri Alaoui	minister of religious endowments and Islamic affairs
Abdellatif Guerraoui	minister of energy and mines
Abdessadek Rabi	secretary general of the government
Said Ameskane	minister of transport
Hamza Kettani	minister of posts and telecommunications
Ahmed Meziane	minister of youth and sport
Amine Damnati	minister of employment and social affairs
Said Fassi	minister of housing
Mohamed Alaoui Mohamadi	minister of tourism
Noureddine Benomar Alami	minister of environment
Abdessalem Baroual	minister of vocational training
Mohamed Alami	minister of external trade
Abderrahmane Sbai	minister delegate to the prime minister
Messaoud Mansouri	minister delegate to the prime minister in charge of administrative affairs
Mohamed Hamma	minister delegate to the prime minister in charge of promoting the economy
Mohamed Ziane	minister delegate to the prime minister in charge of human rights
Lamine Benomar	minister delegate to the prime minister in charge of population
Taieb Fassi Fehri	secretary of state for foreign affairs and cooperation
Lahsene Gabon	deputy secretary of state to the minister of foreign affairs in charge of the affairs of the Moroccan community abroad
Abdelaziz Msioui	deputy secretary of state to the minister of foreign affairs in charge of relations with the Union of the Arab Maghreb Union.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Denounces Allegations by Human Rights Group

EA2402211095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in English 1800 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The allegations self-created by Amnesty International [AI] on alleged violations of human rights in the Sudan have been denounced by president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir. In a statement to the French television, President al-Bashir said the allegations self-created by AI included lots of lies and contradictions, which implied its enmity with the Sudan without paying a visit to the country. President al-Bashir expressed Sudan's rejection to any projected visit to the country by AI. He then noted that the Sudan had previously agreed to permit an AI delegation to visit the country, but the delegation declined to complete the visit and prepared instead a fabricated report of human rights abuses in Sudan.

The president, however, refuted the allegations circulated by the west on military training camps sponsored by the government to wage war in southern Sudan. He pointed out that the Popular Defense Forces have attracted all sectors of the Sudanese people to conscribe [as heard] a national reserve for contingencies and to impose discipline on the Sudanese people. Al-Bashir said the imposing of discipline and military training on the people was a prerequisite for economic development. He went on to say that the military camps are used to provide spiritual and religious lessons to recruits to help create a prudent Muslim society.

President al-Bashir said the Sudanese people are enjoying a unique religious tolerance. Sudan is paying due respect to the interests of young Muslim citizens, especially Christians, who are equally leading their lives as [words indistinct]. Sudan will produce an example of

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religious tolerance for the whole world, especially those who suffer from religious indignities, said al- Bashir.

Al-Bashir made the remarks yesterday while addressing the first [word indistinct] ceremony organized by the Coptic church of Khartoum.

Ex-Foreign Minister Abu Salih Interviewed

MM2402145595 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Feb 95 p 5

[Interview with former Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Abu-Salih by Muhammad Sa'id Muhammad al-Hasan in Khartoum "one day before he was relieved of his post"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Hasan] It has been reported that the Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki carried with him on his recent visit to the United States two dossiers: one pertaining to Sudan and the other pertaining to the Eritrean Jihad Organization. What does this imply and what do you expect?

[Abu Salih] Of course, Isaias Afewerki's visit to the United States and his efforts to draw closer to it are only natural and compatible with the nature of the relationship that exists between Eritrea and the United States.

Today, the United States sides with the regime in Eritrea and it has its own reasons, motives, and interests for doing so, now that it has turned the page of its past animosity to Afewerki and placed him on the list of its friends, particularly as Afewerki has a special relationship with Israel, as evidenced by the fact that when Israel heard of his illness a year ago, it rushed to send a special plane to carry him for treatment in one of Tel-Aviv's hospitals and it always makes a point of meeting all his requests in all fields.

Furthermore, the United States and the administration of President Bill Clinton have their new attitudes to the Horn of Africa. President Clinton's administration has been speaking of the need to break the circle of despair that engulfs the Horn of Africa, and to create a Greater Horn of Africa that would include Tanzania, Ruwanda and Burundi in addition to the Horn of Africa member countries and enable them to secure their food needs.

This is a policy which Sudan does not accept because it has its own policies, capabilities and resources that satisfy its demands and provide it with food, except for the Southern areas where the war operations are raging.

Anyway, the important thing is that the U.S.Administration is working to marginalize Sudan's role in Africa in general and in the Horn of Africa region in particular. But Sudan's current conditions and its continental size makes it difficult for any power to bypass it, be it in the Horn of Africa or in the Middle East. Thus the marginalization of the Sudan is unthinkable.

The U.S.Administration now feels cordiality toward Eritrea and provides it with aid and help while it harbors nothing but hatred for, and animosity toward, Sudan. This animosity toward Sudan did not begin with the establishment of the Salvation Regime on 30 June 1989 but five years before that. But the United States made a sharp display of its teeth and claws only recently, aiming by this to deflect Sudan from its course and declared objectives.

Isaias Afewerki's visit to the United States is aimed at securing the necessary finance for an investment program in Eritrea. So in order to guarantee this, he had to take with him the files of his accusations against, and animosity toward, Sudan. But his accusations are not new, because they preceded him, having been sent before him to the corridors of the United Nations.

It has become fashionable for everyone who seeks to curry favor with the United States to show first his animosity toward, and opposition to, Sudan. But as Sudan knows Afewerki very well, it does not wish to give him greater importance than his size deserves.

As to his dossier on the Eritrean Jihad Organization, Sudan has nothing to do with this organization, except in as much as concerns the presence of the Eritrean refugees in Sudan. Since the declaration of Eritrea's independence, we have declared that the reasons for the presence of the Eritrean refugees in Sudan are no longer there. Thus, Afewerki's visit to the United States and his dossiers are of no concern at all to us.

[Al-Hasan] How do you explain the sharp deterioration of relations between Sudan and Eritrea from those of friendship to those of a severance of this relationship, flagrant hostility and threats?

[Abu Salih] One cannot talk about Sudanese-Eritrean relations without talking about the background of the presence of Eritrean movements in Sudan 30 years ago. Sudan suffered much from the effects of the animosity and disputes with the regime of Emperor Haile Selassie in Ethiopia and later with that of Mengistu Haile Mariam, who was not content with showing hostility but went further to the extent of waging a war against Sudan by providing support to the John Garang movement in the form of finance, arms and bases in order to pressure Sudan into halting its aid to the Eritrean movements, thereby keeping these movements away from Sudan. But Sudan did not succumb to the pressure and provided protection, security, food, medicine, and shelter to the Eritreans and endured in the process all the negative aspects of their presence such as the pollution of the environment and the weakening of its natural wealth because its forestry wealth in Eastern Sudan shrunk to a mere 5

because the Eritrean refugees used the trees as firewood.

As to the Eritrean Islamic Jihad Organization, it does not operate from Sudanese territory. It is an Eritrean organization which has no presence inside Sudan, its elements having been deported sometime ago. We are prepared to close the border, but in that case the Eritrean

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people alone will be the ones to suffer, because the majority of what they need comes in across the Sudanese border.

[Al-Hasan] Whenever observers believed that the cycle of tension and crises between Sudan and Egypt had come to an end, they would be surprised by the start of another cycle, such as the embarkation on the liquidation of joint institutions such as the Nile Valley Navigation Board. In what direction are relations between the two countries moving?

[Abu Salih] I shall not hide the fact that I got fed up talking about Sudanese-Egyptian relations. Nor shall hide my strong feelings of sorrow and frustration at the lack of response I received despite all the invitations I sent out expressing my anxiousness for close cooperation with Egypt even to the extent of the establishment of a bilateral alliance in line with the nature of our historical relations, interests, and common concerns. We have failed to receive any response to these invitations, not even a signal indicating readiness to break the ice. I do not know for sure if this meant rejection of cooperation or something else. But, in any case, this is a sad and regrettable situation. Any lost or dissipated time will only detract from the interests of both countries. I am extremely sad.

We do not change either our principles or our convictions. But this freezing and deterioration of our bilateral relations in the present conditions in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa demands some explanation.

Our firm unwavering convictions are: We are for good relations with Egypt and for Arab solidarity and might. We are also for the activation of the Arab League and its vital role, and with comprehensive and just peace in the region, and with the policy of good-neighborliness including noninterference in internal affairs. We adhere to these convictions and we will not change our beliefs.

[Al-Hasan] How are your relations progressing with the other neighboring countries: Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda?

[Abu Salih] Our relations with Ethiopia are normal and so are they with Kenya too. As for Uganda, we have frequently and repeatedly said that it supports the rebellious movement of John Garang. Uganda itself did not deny this fact. It is now a route they use for their activities and for securing their arms.

We ask them to withdraw their support, otherwise we will loose patience with them. We have gotten fed up with the state of no war, no peace. God willing, this year shall be the year of decision.

As to Uganda's allegations that the Sudanese army has shelled positions inside Ugandan territory, they are not true. Uganda has gotten used to crying on behalf of the rebellious Movement whenever the Sudanese army performed its duty in its territory and within its borders.

[Al-Hasan] What is your position toward the IGADD [Intergovernmental Authority on Development and Drought] group (Uganda, Kenya, Eritrea and Ethiopia) and toward the mediation for stopping the war in the South and the possible securing of the help of an international observer?

[Abu Salih] With regard to the IGADD initiative, the IGADD must rectify its position, for what is happening now is nothing more than a waste of time. We have alerted the IGADD groups to this fact three times already. The first time was when we asked them to create a machinery for speeding up the negotiation process for ending the war and the establishment of peace. The second time was when the IGADD drew up its schedule and what it called a Declaration of Principles without prior agreement from the parties concerned. The third time was when an attempt was made to bring in the United Nations as an observer without prior consultation with Sudan, despite the fact that that initiative was originally Sudan's, as it urged the IGADD in 1993 to perform its role of securing peace on the ground that peace was important for Sudan and for the neighbouring countries. But IGADD began to assume for itself roles and powers without consulting the party concerned [Sudan].

Now IGADD's attitude is engulfed in inaction. It is essential firstly to keep Eritrea away, because it has adopted a hostile attitude toward Sudan and has severed its relations with it. It is essential secondly to abandon the ideal of the participation of an international observer in the negotiations. It is essential thirdly that consideration be given to the Sudanese proposals which provide for the drawing up of an agenda for the talks akin to what happened in the Abuja (as transliterated] negotiations.

[Al-Hasan] How are the Sudanese-American relations at present?

[Abu Salih] With regard to the relations with the United States, the American Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs has stated that these relations have been moving backwards, despite our repeated declarations—indeed our policies and plans at the Sudanese Foreign Ministry—that we are for the normalization of relations with Washington. But America seems still to have reservations toward Sudan.

[Al-Hasan] How about your relations with Europe.

[Abu Salih] With regard to Europe, we have a dialogue though it is moving slowly. But we hope that this dialogue will continue and will result in the understanding of the truth about us. Europe still exercise political and economic pressures on Sudan, including the freezing of relations within the framework of the Lome Agreement and consequently the freezing of US$ 500 million due to Sudan.

[Al-Hasan] With whom specifically does the dialogue take place?

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[Abu Salih] The European line toward Sudan is one. But a slow dialogue is taking place with France, the Netherlands, and Italy.

[Al-Hasan] Does Sudan actually suffer from a state of blockade? What do you expect following the repeated convictions [of Sudan over human rights violations] by the international organizations?

[Abu Salih] Naturally, there is a declared blockade on Sudan, in the form of an information blockade, a political blockade and an economic blockade as well as a manhunt over the international platforms.

[Al-Hasan] What is your reply to the blockade?

[Abu Salih] Firstly, we must impose peace in the South. When peace is strengthened in the South through the program that has been prepared for the implementation of peace internally, then the others could realize the seriousness of our economic, political and social program as well as the internal political changes represented by the holding of direct provincial elections in March which will reflect the extent of the masses' rally around the Sudanese program.

[Al-Hasan] America and the West are still accusing Sudan of harboring terrorism through certain organiations. What do you say about that?

[Abu Salih] Sudan provides shelter for scores of refugees who believe in different religions, Christianity and Atheism. But the West does not talk about these refugees nor about their religions but only about some Muslim individuals who took refuge in Sudan, and whom the West describes as terrorists, its aim being to attribute terrorism to Islam and distort the image of the Muslims and Islam, despite the fact that Islam is a religion of mercy, peace and good. They accuse "Hamas" and "Al-Jihad" and "Hizballah" of terrorism, who are actually not in Sudan and the United States knows well where the places of these organizations are, which, naturally, are not in Sudan.

[Al-Hasan] Do you think the war in the South provides an excuse and a pretext for interference in Sudan?

[Abu Salih] Foreign interference is actually the cause of the war in the South. Had it not been for foreign interference, the war would not have broken out or continued. Sudan wants peace and wants to lift sufferings from the shoulders of its citizens. What we are asking them for is that they not interfere. The sinister elements must cease their interference so that the fighting may stop and peace and harmony prevail.

Tunisia

Industry Minister Announces Liberalization Measures

LD2402195895 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At the end of March, Tunisia will enter the stage after the structural reform of its economy when the final part of its external trade and import prices are liberalized. This was stated by Industry Minister Slaheddine Bouguerra during a news conference he held yesterday [23 February].

He also revealed that this stage would coincide with the establishment of the World Trade Organization and the implementation of the Uruguay Round agreements.

The industry minister said that Tunisia was holding negotiations on setting up a free trade zone with the European Union, with which 75 percent of its trade was conducted. He said that this harmonization would enable the final fusion of the Tunisian economy with the European economy and subsequently with the world economy.

This new harmonization did not constitute any danger or hazard to the Tunisian economy thanks to the arrangements that had been made to protect our economy from unfair competition and prepare it to pass safely through the transitional stage.

Background on Recent Cabinet Change Detailed

Interior Minister Replaced

95AF0048A Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 8 Feb 95 pp 16-17

[Article by Zyad Limam: "Kallel: The Reasons For a Departure"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunisia—By leaving the Interior Ministry, Abdallah Kallel has not fallen into disfavor. Quite the contrary.

In the waiting room of the interior minister's office, a very austere one, as required, there is a gallery of photographs of all the holders of the office since independence: here, all in a row, are the black and white pictures, the somewhat strained smiles, and the histories of these senior Tunisian civil servants. You see the Taieb Mehiris, Driss Guigas, Tahar Belkhodjas, and so forth from the Bourguiba era, and the Habib Ammars, Chedli Neffatis, and Abdelhamid Escheikhs of the Ben Ali era.

On 17 February 1991, when he was appointed interior minister, Abdallah Kallel did not seem, to the general public, in any event, like a man called upon to make a lasting mark on the political scene. This 51-year-old native of Sfax, ever the legal eagle, seemed to be just an apparatchik. People thought he would stay one.

He had studied economics, studied at the National School of Administration, and been head of the defense minister's departmental staff (from 1974 to 1980). In a word, overall a classic career for a senior civil servant.

But Abdallah Kallel's straightforward career path changed in May 1986. He became the secretary general of the Interior Ministry, where he worked under a certain Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. The minister liked the civil servant's efficiency. His boss was named prime minister

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on 2 October 1987 and Kallel became the junior minister at the Interior Ministry 36 days before that famous 7 November.

Within a few months the self-effacing Kallel became one of the pillars of the Ben Ali system. He became junior minister to the president, secretary general of the Defense Minister, Defense Minister, then Interior Minister and cabinet minister. He seemed not to have any ambition and yet he was still there, behind the president but at the center of everything.

Without really wanting to, Abdallah Kallel, the militant who became a minister-technocrat, slipped bit by bit into the clothes of the minister-politician. The unflappable appearance of the country's top police officer hides a man with a fine-tuned sense of judgment. A servant of President Ben Ali and the government, he also has his own convictions. As a supporter of law and order, even to the detriment of political openness, he is regarded as a "hard-liner" and does not hide his lack of sympathy for the liberals, those "frequenters of salons and fine talkers." As a member of the political board and treasurer of the RCD (Constitutional Democratic Rally), he has a relationship which is not always an easy one with Chedli Neffati, the secretary general.

In a country where people love to go out, talk, and be seen, and where, to do so, one must appear, he, on the other hand, cultivates discretion with a vengeance. He is seen at neither society dinners nor fashionable restaurants. He does not spend his vacations at the seaside resort of Hammamet. Though he is accessible to those who know how to approach him, he remains someone who is hard to figure out, even to those who regularly spend time with him. If he had been a Christian, this Sfax native would certainly have been a Calvinist. Morals, work, and devotion count above all else.

Rigid in the face of opposition and employing all of a minister's resources to curb it, he has quickly become the preferred target of certain intellectual milieux and the opposition. In the eyes of what might be called the "liberal party," he is the man through whom "change will not come," particularly since he is the author of the law on associations, a document apparently aimed at the Tunisian Human Rights League. In particular he is the head of the police, the man who issues or does not issue passports, who has you followed or put under surveillance...incidentally like any other chief of police.

In his way, Abdallah Kallel has been a great interior minister. In 1991, when he took over the position, the country was in full Islamist agitation. Within a few months he transformed a slightly dusty ministry into a veritable combat headquarters against the Islamists, who were the government's main opponents. Security, intelligence, administration: he reasserted control of it all. Computerization was imposed and university graduates recruited. From his office Kallel knew what was going on in Tunisia...and elsewhere. Islamists were infiltrated and their actions within Tunisia neutralized. In the words of one French specialist: "The Tunisians constructed an intelligence system worthy of a developed country." In any event, he discreetly savors his greatest victory: it was during his term that the country practically eliminated the Islamist threat. Whence, oddly for someone in charge of law and order, a certain popularity. If the liberals and those in the opposition fear him, ordinary people like him, and the business world, which has no second thoughts, is grateful to him for protecting their [bank] safes with such efficiency.

Cooped up in his office at least 12 hours a day and traveling very little, he goes on missions to Libya and Algeria and has been establishing solid international friendships in Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and France as well.

Between the very reserved Abdallah Kallel, who enjoys the gift of a remarkable sense of humor and repartee, and Charles Pasqua, very much the man of southern France, oddly enough the spark is there. The two men talk regularly to one another on the telephone on a direct line. Strangely enough, this minister, who is sometimes reluctant to speak French, a language he commands perfectly, however, is one of the top Tunisian specialists on France. And on Algeria. He likes to be informed, study files, and have contacts. In a word, in a world in which information takes precedence, he is up to date.

And yet he is leaving his position. Some commentators have spoken of an official dismissal with a view toward facilitating political openness. This is a quick assessment, made outside the circle of those in the know. The 24 January shuffle appears more like an adjustment than a break (see the following article). Kallel was certainly a powerful interior minister, but his departure can only be understood in relation to the country's political realities. In Tunisia the government is very presidential. The general thrust comes from Carthage Palace. The president draws on a small group of faithful supporters. Kallel has been a minister longer (three years and 11 months) than his three precedessors taken together (three years and three months). He is one of the veterans, part of the hard core, part of the first or second circle, like his successor Mohamed Jegham (former minister of tourism), the prime minister, Hamed Karoui, and Abdelwahab Abdallah, the minister who is the spokesman for the presidency.

So his change of duties arose out of presidential logic. Kallel fulfilled his mission, will change jobs, and will become a special counselor to Ben Ali as he waits for the next mission which only the president knows.

He remains a cabinet minister, a member of the RCD's policy board, and party treasurer. He is a true soldier, one faithful to Tunisia and the president, and one day soon those who think he is already retired or in "the closet" will have another think coming.

As for the man in question, he is calm: "Someone who is appointed one day must expect to be changed the next," he said with a half-smile as he prepared to leave the

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austere office at the ministry for the much more Mediterranean and warmer decor of Carthage Palace.

New Positions Created

95AF0048B Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 8 Feb 95 pp 17-19

[Article by Ridha Kefi: "What Will Change"]

[FBIS Translated Text] With the announcement made by the prime minister, Hamed Karoui, on Tuesday, 24 January, about the makeup of the new government, Tunisians immediately started speculating about the reasons that had led President Ben Ali to choose one man in place of another. They enjoy discovering losers and tracking those in the political class to whom this shuffle could provide reasons to be pleased or...worried.

In the absence of an opposition capable of energizing political life and of leading figures who could distract the somewhat flat consensus landscape with their pranks or dramatics, this shuffle represents a political event of the first order.

If this cabinet shuffle surprised more than one observer, it was not as much because of its political content as because of its timing. Indeed people had been expecting changes in the government team for at least a year. It had been spoken of just before the presidential and legislative elections last 20 March. And then [again] right after those same elections. Indeed the partial shuffle that took place during the summer affected only education and post-secondary education. It took the form of the arrival of a newcomer, Hatem Ben Othman, but also the departure—an expected one—of Mohamed Charfi and the return—this one an unexpected one—of Dali Jazi, both leading figures from the left-wing intelligentsia of the 1960s and 1970s and founding members of the Tunisian Human Rights League (LTDH).

Following the discussion of the state budget, the rumor of an impending shuffle again took on new life. That was how influential figures were "nominated"—as if for the Oscars!—to certain key positions. The departure of certain others, who were just as influential, was also "announced." And, as usual, these rumors fed discussions in business coffee rooms, ministry offices, and in corridors of public offices in vain because they were baseless. Because up till the eve of the shuffle, nothing specific had seeped out of Carthage Palace.

We know that in Tunisia two centers of interest seize the attention of decisionmakers. First there is the "security center," which the trend in developments in Algeria keeps at the top of the government's lists of concerns. The Islamist threat and the crisis affecting the country next door have often had a not negligible weight in the way certain choices were made. Tunisians know that, in order to stave off any eventuality, they have only one genuinely efficient solution: consolidate the home front. But in order to maintain the climate of security and stability currently prevailing in their country, they must safeguard "civil peace," something that happens through the reestablishment of dialogue between the state and civil society's various actors. In this respect a relaxation of the political cimate in the country would be welcome.

Since the implementation of the structural adjustment plan (PAS), in 1986, Tunisians' second center of interest relates to the economy and social factors. The recent signature by Tunisia of the new GATT accords and the measures taken by the government with a view towards facilitating the entry of the Tunisian economy into the flow of world exchanges, have undoubtedly conditioned in a large measure the changes of jobs of the ministers concerned.

It is based on these ideas that one should analyze a shuffle that seems not to mark a turning point, even less a break, in political life. Because, contrary to the analysis by certain Western specialists, the shuffle, as a whole, is part of a logic whose coherence can immediately be grasped. As a reformer but not a revolutionary head of state, Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali has often demonstrated his prudence and circunspection. This trend in the makeup of his character is of course reinforced by the instability prevailing in the region. He is a man of change, to be sure, but not one of brutal repudiations.

So we can understand why certain observers have noted the absence of truly "new" men in the new government team. There were some departures, to be sure, and some advancements assuredly, and some returns, some spectacular, but no real surprise. "They're taking the same men and starting over," commented one intellectual who was disappointed by politics. "You don't change a winning team," shot back a member of the opposition who could not be suspected of looking kindly on the government. So "the president's men" are reported to have worked well and this relatively homogeneous group no doubt deserved the confidence which the head of state reiterated in them.

The change which occurred in the makeup of the policy board of the Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD—the party in power), which was decided upon the very next day after the cabinet shuffle, corroborates this trend (even if some departures were noted, that of Abderrahim Zouari, the current minister of youth and childhood, among them). Because if, in the government and in Ben Ali's entourage, there are different temperaments and men's quarrels, there are not, at least right now, any real policy disputes. So there are differences of style, sometimes, but no divergences of ideas. Besides, when you take a closer look, the makeup of the RCD's new policy board demonstrates a concern for coherency, since only the country's top agencies will now be represented on it: the president of the country, the Chamber of Deputies, and the four sovereignty ministries (interior, defense, justice, and foreign affairs).

So "no change for the sake of change, but a change all the same." It was in those terms, in any event, that one analyst of Tunisian political life thought it possible to

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summarize this latest move within the government. Since the government does not face a serious crisis, President Ben Ali had no reason to "upset the apple cart." By changing some men and dividing some ministries in two, even in three, it is possible that he set himself at least two complementary aims: give the government's work a new spark and avoid having a certain routine feel settle into the state's machinery.

As for the streets, they reacted in their customary way. The news of the shuffle was given a mixed welcome because rare is the Tunisian today who can identify the directions or the exact policy stakes behind the men. In intellectual circles, the reaction was fairly divided. There are those who see in Mohamed Jegham's nomination to head up the Interior Ministry one sign of openness by the state in the direction of a civil society. The establishment, within the same ministry, of a state secretariat responsible for security could, according to this same analyst, be evidence of a willingness to free the new minister of certain "technical" duties to allow him to devote himself to running political affairs and local communities. In particular he will have to bring the regions, where the democratic process seems to be experiencing problems getting solid bearings, into unison with the reforms initiated by Tunis. Several months before municipal elections, a new test of credibility for the democratic forces, the presence of a man who favors dialogue heading up the Interior Ministry could well facilitate many things.

These elections will occur at a crucial moment. Security issues are still on the agenda, which explains, in part, why they were entrusted to an independent department, the state secretariat in charge of security, and to one man, Mohamed Ali Ganzoui, who has extensive experience in the field.

There has been a new division of tasks as well at the level of economic departments. As the minister of the plan and regional development since March 1990, Mustapha Kamel Nabli is now responsible for a new department practically created for him, that of economic development. In particular he will have to oversee the implementaton of development plans drawn up under his aegis and benefit from his knowledge of the heart of Tunisia to bring about a better regional balance in favor of areas which until now have been less fortunate: the northwest and the southwest.

After having served as principal advisor to the president, then that of the state secretary to the economy minister, Slaheddine Bougerra has been appointed industry minister, a strategic sector if ever there was one. So at last he has been granted an independent department. The determination that has been exhibited to have Tunisia join the ranks of "emergent" countries by the start of the next century is in large measure a tribute to the success of the restructuring plan for businesses that was adopted to this end. And this is something that amply justifies the heightened interest in the industrial sector, which has been called upon to modernize rapidly and conform to the demands of world competition. So there is a lot to do for the new minister.

As the commerce minister, a post he has already occupied several times since 1977, Slaheddine Ben Mbarek is an old veteran of politics. As the ambassador to Brussels since April 1993, he has frequently been a participant in the negotiations between Tunisia and the European Union. His experience in this area is an asset. His contribution should be up to expectations by local businessmen, who are anxious to protect themselves from the negative fallout of the liberalization of foreign trade and, if possible, profit from it. Improving the country's export potential by conquering new markets is the main challenge that this "technician" is supposed to take up.

It remains to be seen, of course, who will be put in charge of coordinating the activity of these three ministries and who will have the authority to arbitrate in cases of conflict.

The outgoing economy minister, Sadok Rabah, has been appointed minister of social affairs, a move that astonished more than one observer. But his understanding of the country's overall economic situation is sufficient to justify this choice. In any event Sadok Rabah will have a lot to do to conclude successfully the negotiations concerning the revision of the labor code, something which was made necessary by the new liberal economic options decided upon by the president. This is a negotiation that is all the more difficult since the main workers' union (the General Union of Tunisian Workers [UGTT]), seems shaken by an ever more confrontational base.

Under the heading of unexpected returns, there is that of Habib Ammar heading up a fairly technical department, communications. A long-term friend of President Ben Ali's, he has been in charge of major government tasks since the aftermath of the 7 November 1987 shakeup: he was the interior minister until July 1988, then state minister in charge of the interior until June 1989, at which time he was named ambassador to Vienna. It is understood that his return, after such a long march through the desert, has given rise to the most varied comments. Is this a point of departure for more important duties? Or above all is there the wish to put order into a strategic sector that needs to have a true politician heading it?

Having been promoted to being tourism minister, Slaheddine Maaoui will for the first time leave his favorite sector, information. Will he be out of his element because of this? "Mr. Tunisia's Image Abroad" has certainly profited from his stay as head of the ATCE (Tunisian Exterior Communication Agency) to refine his communicator's profile. In a sector like tourism, where the warmth of human contact, service quality, and the country's image count as much as the size of its infrastructure or the neatness of the beaches, the new minister should bring "something extra" by comparison with his talented predecessor. His departure from the ATCE,

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though, signals one of this shuffle's shortcomings. Despite ever more pressing demands, nothing has been touched in the information sector, even though it has been much criticized. The appointments of Mohamed Mahfoud, the former head of the government daily newspaper LA PRESSE, to the TAP agency (TUNIS AFRIQUE PRESSE), and the appointment of a former director of political affairs to the Interior Ministry (and the outgoing CEO of the TAP), Moncef Ben Tmessek, to the ATCE, seem on the other hand to underline the division of the information and communications sector. One of the appointments that surprised no one was that of Salah Baccari to head up the Ministry of Culture. As one already responsible for the area at the presidential level, this teacher of Arabic is supposed to continue the reform work already begun in this sector, for a long time a marginalized one, by Mongi Bousnina. Enveloped in the 1980s by the fundamentalist cloud, now more than ever this sector will have to serve as a dam to obscurantist currents.

Above and beyond regional calculations, which are fairly obsolete, dealing as they do, for example, with the number of Sahelians who are a part of the government and the number of Sfax natives leaving it, the backdrop for this new phase has now been set. Other changes are in sight: numerous political and administrative posts and even some within the ruling party are currently vacant. The predictions game so dear to Tunisians will no doubt be able to resume.

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Kuwait

Iranian Foreign Minister Praises Relations

LD2602122295 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1020 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tehran, 26 Feb—Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati has expressed his deep satisfaction with the development of relations [word indistinct] with Kuwait and stressed that Iran accorded special importance to strengthening these relations.

In statements he made while participating in the Iftar banquet hosted yesterday evening by 'Abdallah al-Duwaikh, the Kuwaiti ambassador in Iran, on the occasion of the 34th anniversary of Kuwait's national day and the fourth anniversary of its liberation from the Iraqi aggression, he said that Kuwaiti-Iranian relations had taken their natural course during the years following the banishment of the invading Iraqi forces from Kuwait and had become excellent, thanks to the care and efforts of officials in the two countries.

He went on to say that this mutual understanding and Kuwaiti-Iran rapprochement would not only benefit the two neighbor countries, but would also help to strengthen relations, bring about closer positions between Iran and the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] states without exception on regional issues and bolster security and peace in the Gulf region. The Iranian foreign minister also expressed the hope that Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, Kuwaiti first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, would visit Iran soon to exchange views on bilateral issues and the latest events in the region, in response to the visit Velayati made to Kuwait in 1993. [passage omitted]

Ambassador al-Duwaikh said that he would soon convey an official invitation from Ahmad al-Sa'dun, speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, to his Iranian counterpart Nateq-Nuri in response to the visit to Iran made by Sa'dun in 1993. [passage omitted]

Albright Promises To Ensure Sanctions on Iraq

LD2602120195 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1115 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 26 Feb—Madeleine Albright, the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, arrived here today at noon from Muscat on a visit that will continue for several hours. [passage omitted]

In a brief statement on her arrival, Albright said: "I have admired Kuwait a lot, and for a long I wanted to visit it. It gives me pleasure to visit you and celebrate with you the anniversary of liberation."

She added that her current tour aimed at ensuring "the existence of a solid base for preserving the sanctions imposed on Iraq and that Kuwait remains a free country."

The U.S. diplomat pointed out that she was carrying a message from the U.S. President Bill Clinton "to emphasize the seriousness of this issue [the sanctions]."

Albright agreed with Dakhil [Kuwaiti cabinet affairs minister] on the necessity of Iraq adhering to all the resolutions of the UN Security Council before lifting the sanctions.

Dakhil said that the United States and Kuwait "are working together as allies to strengthen our position and to achieve stability in the region." [passage omitted]

Meets With Amir

LD2602141395 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1315 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 26 Feb—The American envoy met today Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah and delivered to him a message from the U.S. President Bill Clinton the contents of which was not revealed.

The envoy was Madeleine Albright, U.S. representative at the United Nations, who had arrived in Kuwait today on a short visit within her tour of a number of the Security Council member-states.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, and other senior members of the government in addition to the U.S. ambassador to Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Cabinet Welcomes Saudi-Yemeni Accord

LD2702173295 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1547 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 27 Feb—The Council of Ministers held its weekly meeting this morning under the chairmanship of Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister.

After the meeting 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dakhil, minister of state for cabinet affairs and minister of planning, said the council began its meeting by reviewing the messages received by Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah from U.S. President Bill Clinton. [passage omitted]

The council was also briefed on the amir's upcoming visit to Copenhagen at the head of Kuwait's delegation to the international summit on social development scheduled to take place 11-12 March. [passage omitted]

Al-Dakhil added that the council has heard with deep satisfaction of the memorandum of understanding on border issues between sisterly Saudi Arabia and Yemen signed in holy Mecca on 26 February. He said that Kuwait welcomes the agreement between the two fraternal states arrived at through negotiations and dialogue. It salutes the high brotherly spirit demonstrated by the officials of both countries, as well as the wisdom

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and farsightedness displayed in dealing with the border issues by peaceful ways and means, which will contribute to the attainment of security, stability, and prosperity by the states of the region. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Leaves UK After 'Successful Visit'

LD2502163095 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1519 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, 25 Feb (KUNA)—Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the delegation accompanying him left London today to return to Kuwait after a two-day visit at the end of his European tour. [passage omitted]

In a comment on Shaykh al-Sabah's visit to London, Khalid al- Duwaysan, Kuwaiti ambassador in London, said that it could be considered "a very successful visit."

He told KUNA that the British side had stressed its "firm stance" on not lifting the sanctions against Iraq until it complies with all UN Security Council resolutions, including the release of Kuwaiti POWs, the return of property it plundered from Kuwait during the occupation, and respect for security in the region. [passage omitted]

Al-Duwaysan said that Shaykh al-Sabah explained to the British officials Kuwait's stance on the developments in the region, over which there was agreement with them "in many respects."

He said that this mutual understanding is an indication of the "solid and excellent relations between the two countries." [passage omitted]

Qatar

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Topical Issues

NC2402164295 Doha Qatar Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 11 Feb 95 (Tentative)

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani by Muhammad al-Misfir; place not given; from the "Dialogue on an Issue" program—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Misfir] Brothers and sisters, good evening and God's peace and blessings be with you. Welcome to your weekly "Dialogue on an Issue" program. Today's theme is an open dialogue on inter-Arab issues. Our guest tonight is His Excellency Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani. On behalf of our viewers and the program staff, we welcome Shaykh Hamad to our weekly program.

[Hamad] Thank you.

[Al-Misfir] I hope you will be patient with us as you talk about many diverse issues, issues that entail many crises in the search by our Arab world, from the Gulf to the ocean, for peace, security, stability, prosperity, progress, and growth. I hope you will be patient with us tonight. Your Excellency, Mr. Foreign Minister, Qatar is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] and many Arab, international, and regional organizations. Some of the GCC leaders describe Qatar as a dissenting partner on issues that concern the Gulf region's countries in general and the GCC in particular. Let us start with Qatar's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. There is much talk about this. The Islamic Republic of Iran—and before that Iran under the shah—occupied islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. Alone among the GCC countries, Qatar has unique relations with Iran. What is Qatar's stand on this issue?

[Hamad] First, I am glad to be on this program and wish it continued success. This program has undoubtedly enriched Qatar's television service and given a specific example of how to discuss many issues that concern us here and abroad.

Qatar has a clear and frank policy based on nonintervention in the affairs of any country. Since we do not accept any intervention in our affairs by anyone, we therefore do not agree to intervene in others' affairs. As you said, the State of Qatar is a member of the GCC, the Arab League, and the United Nations as an international framework. Qatar's presence in these regional and international organizations has shown that we are an internationally linked society. This linkage requires our presence in these organizations, through which we can exercise our activities with other countries, major or small.

Regarding Iranian-Qatari relations, I said at the start of my talk that we accept relations without nonintervention in any country's internal affairs. On this premise, Iran is a neighbor and a major regional country. I personally believe that it has status. Our policy in Qatar recognizes its weight in the region and we cannot keep it at arms length from events in the region. We might differ with Iran over some issues and might agree on others. But the strategic principle of Qatar's relations is to have good relations with everyone, including a neighboring country with which we have common borders, namely the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is on this premise that we began to develop Qatari-Iranian relations. This does not mean that we agree on everything. But we are doing our best to make these relations benefit Qatar and the GCC countries and to have an open dialogue with the neighboring countries, especially Iran and other countries that I will talk about later.

The issue of the three UAE islands—Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al- Sughra, and Abu Musa—undoubtedly concerns us because we are part of the Arab Gulf. Since these islands concern us, we always advise the two sides, including our friends in Iran, that this issue must have a peaceful solution. And we hope this principle will prevail throughout our regional Gulf community. There must be

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an understanding to resolve these issues without military clashes because such clashes, especially in our region, have created more problems than they have solved. As I said, there must be a peaceful solution to this issue; and if they do not reach a solution, then they could agree to submit it to international adjudication, including the International Court of Justice, to look into and to resolve peacefully.

[Al-Misfir] Your Excellency Shaykh Hamad, there is another point regarding Iran, which continues to occupy these islands. In all the statements by the GCC and any other meeting we see that Qatar joins or adds its voice when countries call on both sides, or Iran in particular, to acknowledge that these islands belong to the UAE and state that Iran must withdraw from them and must give full sovereignty to the UAE. This leads me to the other distinguished relations. Qatar has gone beyond this stand of going along with the various statements, and I believe the Iranians may have an opinion in this regard. The issue here is that there is talk of strategic projects between Qatar and Iran. I mention in particular the issue of water or the water pipeline that starts from the Qarun River, as far as I remember, and is bring water to Qatar. In the long term, this will upset the security of the Gulf and the security of Qatar too. There are many objections to this project by regional countries, other Arab states that are remote from this region, and some world states, who say that this project is not meant to bring benefits but perhaps could be a source of tension among the GCC member states in the future. Qatar embarked on this step while it could have obtained water from other sources, either subterranean or sea water. Where does Qatar stand as far as this issue is concerned?

[Hamad] First of all, Qatar is polite in any statement. Qatar has previously rejected and expressed reservations on some GCC statements. However, we vote for any issue that we believe in. Accordingly, we believed that this issue should be solved peacefully, in accordance with the statements issued or through the International Court of Justice. This is a Qatari belief, policy, and principle, which we retain. As for the question of water, it has been blown out of proportion. First of all, it was said that the project would cost $6 billion, when in fact it does not exceed $1.2 billion. Secondly, Qatar must cooperate with its neighbors, both in the Gulf and elsewhere; and there must be common interests linking countries so that these interests prevail over their differences. On this premise, we believe that this pipeline will consolidate Qatari-Iranian relations and, thereby, perhaps Iran's relations with the other GCC member states. Also in connection with the question of water, Qatar is not giving up on desalination, because water is a strategic commodity. This is just one source. There are previous studies on importing water from Turkey, Iraq, and by various other means. At one point someone even studied the idea of bringing icebergs here. So there are studies in this regard. This project will not be carried out unless it is economically feasible. It is now in its final stages of economic feasibility studies. If it proves to be economically feasible, we believe that we will proceed with it because we believe it will lead to consolidating the ties between Iran and Qatar. As I have already mentioned, we are keen to maintain amicable relations with all neighbors.

[Al-Misfir] Your Excellency, concerning interests and the question of economic feasibility, if things are viewed from a purely economic perspective without taking into account the future or the long-term strategy—as you know there are no permanent friends or permanent enemies in international relations—if Qatar relies on the water imported via pipeline, which will be very expensive according to the studies, this could affect Qatar's security, which in turn could affect security in the Gulf region. Do you agree with this?

[Hamad] I do not agree with this view. Brother al-Misfir, you said that there are no permanent enmities or permanent friendships, but you did not finish the sentence: there are permanent interests. And this is a logic which the West and the entire world believe in. Whenever there are common interests among states, it is an important element and an important link. There is no doubt that such links follow political decisions. However, I believe that politics must serve the economy and not vice versa. Now we have to build our states on economic bases and according to clear and sound vision.

Responsibility is a trust; so are decisions. Accordingly, we believe that it is not true that we will put our heads into the hands of the Iranians, as is being suggested. This is not true. As a state, we have a number of strategic plans as far as water is concerned, and this project and this cooperation with Iran is part of them. But at no time will we give up the sources of desalination that exist in the country. However, there must be cooperation among all countries bordering on the Gulf, and I believe that this cooperation as well as common interests will lead to peace and stability in the region.

[Al-Misfir] Let me return to the concept of common interests. I believe there is also a common mistake here. We noticed—and we teach our political science students to notice and compare all political or economic phenomena—that the Soviet Union, for 70 years, was made up of 15 republics linked by common interests, a common fate, and a common objective. Suddenly this entity collapsed and those common interests failed to preserve the Soviet Union. The second case is Yugoslavia. For 45 years after the war, and since its independence, Yugoslavia was made up of six republics. It was a big power. But common interests did not help Yugoslavia survive; the country disintegrated into various republics waging a crushing war among themselves, a war that is still raging. I believe that common interests, if not supported by other factors, are not enough to maintain security and stability anywhere. Let me, Your Excellency Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani, now move to another subject...

[Hamad, interrupting...] I would like to comment on what you have said. You mentioned the Soviet Union.

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Let us look at history and ask: Did the 15 republics that made up the Soviet Union merge of their own free will so that we might say common interests were the common denominator? This is a different story. Those republics went into wars and underwent other developments before they became the Soviet Union. So when they had the chance they demanded their independence and obtained it. There were no common interests but a kind of policy pursued by a particular state that ended in imposing hegemony over other states. If there were common interests, I believe the situation would be different. Take the United States: Some 52 states freely agreed to form the United States. This union and these common interests therefore succeeded. The situation of Yugoslavia is the same as that of the Soviet Union. There were wars and annexation and the seizure of land; there were no common interests, but a different method of unity. This happened in many other countries.

[Al-Misfir] I accept this argument. But let me move to another subject: Qatar's special relations with Iraq, or, what they call it in the GCC, Qatar's departure from Gulf unanimity by moving toward a country on which the entire world is imposing an absolute siege, so absolute that the world would even ban air from entering Iraq if it could. This is the Republic of Iraq, as you agreed to call it at your recent GCC summit in Bahrain. What are the circumstances that push Qatar to infiltrate these ranks and head toward Iraq?

[Hamad] The same principle I mentioned earlier. We believe in establishing good relations with all the sides, especially the neighboring states, and Iraq is a big neighbor the role of which we cannot ignore or cancel out just because it is being subjected to an international embargo. Undoubtedly, we disagree with Iraq over its occupation of Kuwait. This is a principle we upheld in 1990 at the time of the occupation. We still uphold it. And as a UN member state, Qatar respects all UN resolutions concerning the embargo on Iraq, because they have their reasons. So those who argue against Qatar in this regard cannot prove that we violated the embargo or the UN resolutions. But there remains the human element, the strategic Arab element, and Arab-Arab relations. We must view these from a different perspective. We blamed Iraq, disagreed with Iraq, and entered a confrontation against Iraq. This has gone down in history; we cannot deny it or say we made a mistake. I believe our decision was right. But shall we now accept this humiliation of the Iraqi people as reflected in disease and starvation? I think this is a mark of shame on the Arabs before the Iraqi people. We cannot blame the Iraqi people if we are blaming their leadership. We must deal with the Iraqi people. Some people say: Fine, we want to change the leadership before dealing with the people. But here we will be contradicting ourselves by violating the principle of noninterference in internal affairs. Iraq and its people have the right to choose their government and the way they want to be ruled; this is their concern. Likewise, we do not accept anyone interfering in our business or in our internal affairs. If we agree to this, then we must deal with Iraq now in a humanitarian way and try to convince Iraq, discussing with it how it can return to the Arab ranks. When we restore Iraq to the Arab fold, we can restore it to the international fold. I do not believe in the policy of isolating Iraq, isolating Iran, and so on. We do not agree with this policy. The positive or negative influence of these countries will directly affect the GCC states. From this premise we must make our own calculations; we should not receive these calculations from outside and implement them. I believe we should implement what serves our interests in the region. We are part of the world and must be linked with the Western world in a particular context, but not against our pan-Arab interests. Iraq is a big country in the Arab world; it has its weight and influence, and we cannot besiege it. We should ask ourselves: Who will decide to lift the embargo against Iraq? Will it be the United Nations? We accept the UN resolutions. But who will decide for us and dictate to us how to deal with Iraq some day? Do we accept someone dictating to us how to deal with an Arab brother? I think this is a Gulf mistake. This, therefore, is not a departure from unanimity. I believe that differences in views do not spoil cordial relations; differences are healthy.

But we in the Arab world, whenever we meet and no matter how much we differ, we come out and tell the correspondents that the views were identical. This is wrong, because we are doing our citizens an injustice. When a problem arises, they tell us: You said only two days ago that there were no problems, that views were identical, and now you come and tell us you have a problem with this or that country. Why did you not say so? Why did you not say we agreed on this and that and differed on that issue? This is the international norm.

Therefore we should develop ourselves, because the peoples of the region have developed and are not ignorant anymore. They are educated and the world media is now heard and seen everywhere. Hence we must be frank with ourselves and with the peoples of the region. We must tell them on what we agreed and on what we differed. I do not believe in having differences in order to serve a specific objective. The differences must help us reach the ideal solution that serves the GCC, because the principal aim is to maintain and strengthen the GCC and make it more active so that it can rise to the level of the international events that affect the countries in the region.

[Al-Misfir] Your Excellency Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim, I believe, as I heard, that what you have just said is in line with the vision of Dubayy Heir Apparent Shaykh Muhammad Bin- Rashid Al Maktum. Has there been coordination between Qatar and the Dubayy heir apparent or is it a result of patriotic feelings or a desire to protect the united and integral Arab Iraq?

[Hamad] There was in fact no coordination here. I believe that His Highness Dubayy Heir Apparent

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Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Rashid was the first official at this Arab and Gulf level to express what is in the hearts of the majority of GCC countries. He honestly described the Iraqi people's sufferings and what is happening in Iraq. I would like to praise this statement on this program, because it was the first by an official at this level on a sensitive issue that concerns us as Gulf countries more than it does as Arab countries.

[Al-Misfir] We had Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nafisi, teacher of political science at Kuwait University, as our guest on this program. He had an opinion which he wrote about on several occasions and which he continues to stand by, namely that the GCC countries have no future as long as Iraq is a captive and Yemen is remote, and that if the GCC wants stability, guarantees, security, and peace, it has to include these two countries, the Iraqi Republic and Yemen. Do you agree with this? Do you believe that there is an imbalance in the GCC's strategy?

[Hamad] I believe that the principle is acceptable. We must look toward the two countries on the Arabian peninsula with a vast population that qualifies them to perform many duties that serve the purposes of the region and spare it many evils and thus serve the region's interests. But there is the political difference. We have to split the issue into several parts. There is the economic aspect, the humanitarian aspect, the military aspect, and the political one. I cannot say that we are looking toward including them in the GCC immediately. But we can increase their cooperation with us until we reach the level needed for their inclusion in the GCC. There have to be conditions: acceptance and response from both sides. There must be acceptance of the GCC countries' current status, entities, and policies. We might differ on some matters but this should not involve strategic and important issues. There can be different views on issues that concern each country's internal affairs.

As you know, many countries have asked to join the European Union [EU] but they know that they must wait for 10 or 15 years before they can join. Yet they have started to amend and reorganize their laws so that they will be compatible with the EU laws and therefore avoid any imbalance in the laws of all these countries. If there is something of this sort, there must then be a transitional period so that any country that wishes to join the GCC must apply the current economic policies. Application does not mean capitulation or acceptance of all that goes on in the GCC. It means reaching a level of not differing over strategic and political affairs. We can later develop together the GCC process so that it will rise to the level demanded by the peoples of the region.

[Al-Misfir] This, then, is a call addressed to Iraq and Yemen, a call that they come closer to the GCC. The adversaries of the two countries, however, say that Iraq still threatens its neighbors and that it is lying in wait to attack them at any moment. It is also said that the Republic of Yemen is also threatening some of its neighbors. As a member of the GCC Ministerial Council, do you discuss these issues on the basis that there is no fear that what happened [i.e. the Iraqi invasion] will happen again and that if these two countries are brought closer to the GCC then this containment—and I do not say containment in the sense of isolation and estrangement but in the sense of absolute rapprochement within the development process, in what you earlier termed as common interests—will not lead to confrontation, but on the contrary will lead to the security and stability of the region? Do you discuss these things?

[Hamad] In the GCC Ministerial Council we discuss all things. We debate these things in full secrecy and with full understanding. We may disagree over many issues, such as the differences that have emerged. But nevertheless, we agree on many strategic issues. Iraq must prove to its neighbors that it is not a menace to them. I believe tat it has actually begun steps in this context, accepting its border with Kuwait and getting its constitutional institutions to recognize Kuwait as an independent country, as the UN resolutions demand. This is a step in the right direction, and at the same time a step toward confidence in Iraq.

I personally believe that we have to begin talks with these countries to agree on strategic principles. First, there should be no interference in the internal affairs of any country in the GCC. Each state has its own policy and system that no one can change except the people of that state; we cannot select a system for any other country. If we agree on this point, we can then move on to the second one: What interests create mutual benefits, so that this relationship can be a two-way street, with both sides benefiting? I honestly do not believe in aid, grants, and loans. I think our past experience in this regard was a failure. I believe in common interests, common investments, and mutual benefits. This means I can help develop an Arab country that cannot develop its natural resources; and these resources are numerous in the Arab world. But when we reach an understanding with fraternal Yemen and fraternal Iraq that, first, there would be no interference in internal affairs; and, second, that all pending problems, whether economic, military, political, or border-related, must be resolved by peaceful means or by international arbitration. When we agree on this and adopt it as a strategy for our relations, then you feel safe with me and I feel safe with you; and we can expand cooperation and remove the doubts from our souls. Confidence is not built overnight, but over years and through both words and deeds.

[Al-Misfir] Your Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim, we have been talking about the GCC's neighboring countries. Qatar has made a big jump beyond the neighboring states, all the way to Sudan. That country is now living under an undeclared blockade. Does the attempt to reach Sudan reflect unseen ambitions of other parties or does it show adherence to the Arab League Charter and Qatar's principle that no border should separate Qatar from the rest of the Arab world?

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[Hamad] On this particular subject, as I told you, Qatar wants to establish good relations with all sides, Arabs and non-Arabs, but priority is for the Arabs, our brothers. This is why we are dealing with Sudan. If Sudan is accused in issues of terrorism and Islamists assuming power, this is an internal affair that concerns the Sudanese people.

But we do not agree with anyone on terrorism issues. Terrorism is not linked to Islam. Regrettably, the Islamists are being labelled as terrorists under all circumstances. A way is always found to attribute any terrorist act in any part of the world to Islam, when Islam is innocent of this, and Muslims have nothing to do with terrorism. I believe that Islam is the religion of peace, and it does not condone violence. This is not a jump, as you said, but a belief in a certain policy, whether toward Sudan, Mauritania, Morocco, Iraq, Yemen, or the Gulf states. We believe that our relations with them must be cordial and eternal, as we are bound with a common religion, language, and destiny. When we say "common destiny" we really mean it.

The undeclared blockade against Sudan is not in the interest of the Arabs now, and I do not think that we should contribute to it. If we have any observations against Sudan, rather than renounce that country we should talk with its leaders, discuss things directly with them, and explain their shortcomings to them. Either they convince us or we convince them.

[Al-Misfir] Some statements have been issued—I particularly mention a statement by his highness Bahraini Heir Apparent Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah to an Arabic newspaper on 25 January. He said something to the effect that some states wanted the recent GCC summit in Bahrain to fail and that they tried to foil this summit, or failing that, to weaken it in one way or another. In your capacity as Qatari Foreign Minister and as member of the GCC Ministerial Council, what is your comment on this subject and which country did he mean?

[Hamad] First of all, I thank his highness the heir apparent for his personal interest in the GCC. This is a good thing. We hope all our officials will do the same and will always preach rapprochement and discard the superficial differences among their states so that the GCC will achieve good results. However, which country did his highness the Bahraini heir apparent mean? Did he mean Qatar? Frankly speaking, I asked myself that question. If he means that Qatar wanted to foil the summit, then this shows there is a problem within the GCC. If Qatar is a troublemaker in the GCC, we must stand up and ask Qatar: Why are you a troublemaker and why do you wanted to foil the Manama summit, as his highness the Bahraini heir apparent said. The Bahraini heir apparent must offer proof through his foreign minister or through his concerned departments of how Qatar wanted to foil the summit. He must explain so we can answer him. I don't know whom the Bahraini heir apparent meant. However, Qatar did not go to foil the summit. Qatar went to promote the GCC and its march. If we disagree, we disagree for the sake of the GCC and not against its interests. Qatar does not want to put the GCC in a bad light. We have the political will to leave the GCC but that is not our goal. Our strategic objective is to stay in the GCC and to revitalize it. Our discussion with the GCC states—if there is a mistake—is how to correct this mistake. However, I was surprised by his statement. If he means other states from outside the GCC, I have no information on this. If he means some GCC states or if he means Qatar itself, he must present proof. We have the ability to make trouble but that is not our style. The state of Qatar argues about the rights and interests of the GCC and works for the interests of the GCC and not against these interests.

[Al-Misfir] Your Excellency Shaykh Hamad, why do you believe Qatar is meant, unless there was talk in the GCC Ministerial Council pointing to this? The viewers might not realize that Qatar is the accused.

[Hamad] I have told you if the intention is to point the finger at Qatar, I have given you the reply on behalf of the State of Qatar. If the intention is to point the finger at other GCC states, I have also given my reply.

[Al-Misfir] I now move to another point. I am sorry to again mention names but this program is an open dialogue.

[Hamad] I am glad of this.

[Al-Misfir] The Bahraini heir apparent also said that you stated that the agreement reached at the recent GCC summit in Bahrain on solving differences among the member states does not cover the Bahraini-Qatari dispute. He said that your statement in Iran in this regard is very grave behavior and that no one can cancel the GCC summit decisions except the summit itself. Did you make such a statement?

[Hamad] Yes, I made a statement in this regard but perhaps there is a misunderstanding. First of all, I made this statement to the BCC before leaving for Iran. I wish his highness the heir apparent had been informed of this because I believe it was a mistake by the media which said that my statement was made in Iran. I actually repeated this statement in Iran. I see no objection to making a statement in Iran, or in Qatar, or elsewhere. I do not know why Iran is singled out.

I regret to say that there are two interpretations for the heir apparent's remarks. The first interpretation is that he was not informed of what we had discussed and agreed upon at the GCC Ministerial Council. The GCC Ministerial Council was attended by six foreign ministers plus five or six persons from each state. Therefore, we are speaking about 35 people who were present at the meeting. The differences were discussed at the meeting. I said to my fellow foreign ministers that if this includes the Qatari- Bahraini dispute, this dispute is now being

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examined by the International Court of Justice. If it means any differences among the GCC states, we welcome this. From this premise, a long argument ensued over the need to explain matters clearly. This agreement on solving differences must not harm Qatar or Bahrain regarding the case being examined by the International Court of Justice. On this basis, a statement was issued, which was different from the proposed statement. The proposed statement included a mechanism for resolving differences. We accepted the new statement to promote the summit and not to abort it. We accepted the new statement provided that it does not jeopardize our case with the brothers in Bahrain, which is being examined by the International Court of Justice. Shortly, God willing, we will see what the court says. We are awaiting the court's ruling in this regard.

[Al-Misfir] I do not wish to delve into the arguments used by the court, or the differences in court.

[Hamad] I am not a law person.

[Al-Misfir] Neither are we, and our program cannot absorb this big discussion because it is beyond our specialization. However, as is being reported and talked about among those who are interested in GCC matters and the summit resolutions, there is a covenant of honor among the six countries that border issues should not be broached or discussed in the various media, except after the next summit. In other words, there is a period of one year from the time of the Bahrain conference until this matter is finalized at the end of the current year.

[Hamad] Actually, the custodian of the two holy mosques, who was chairing the latest round, offered an honorable initiative in the form of a proposal and his views regarding the course of the GCC. Among them was this proposal. It was warmly welcomed by everyone because we believe in this decision and sound way of thinking, as well as this frankness that was voiced by the custodian of the two holy mosques on how to resolve these conflicts. Agreement was reached not to raise these issues for one year and to attempt to resolve these problems during this year among the GCC countries. We agreed to this proposal, despite the fact that even before the Manama summit, Bahraini media had already spoken a great deal about the International Court of Justice, Qatar, and the relations that Qatar has with Israel, Iran, and Iraq. They wrote a great deal about this topic and, in my opinion, they were trying to arouse the GCC countries against Qatar, saying that this country and these people want to create problems for the region. A questionnaire was formulated and distributed regarding this matter, but I cannot recall exactly what it was.

Our Council of Ministers made the decision not to respond to these newspapers, statements, and articles, whether they appeared in the Bahraini press or foreign press. We know how to deal with the foreign press regarding these matters. On this basis, before the Manama summit, the decision was made that we should not enter into media altercations with our brothers in Bahrain; these, we believe, do not serve the objective of developing the GCC march. It will also not serve the brothers in Bahrain in the purpose for which they published these announcements, statements, or articles.

[Al-Misfir] Shaykh Hamad, many rumors and discussions are circulating regarding the distinguished and sincere relations between Qatar and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Unfortunately, many of these rumors are targeting leadership positions in their countries. I wish to apologize to you once again and I regret to have to mention for the third time during this meeting the name of the heir apparent of fraternal Bahrain, but I have to remark that he stated to an Arab newspaper that the State of Qatar refused the mediation of Saudi Arabia to resolve the conflict between it and its brothers. To what extent is this true?

[Hamad] First, what is being said about Qatar's relationship with the fraternal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not true. We might disagree with the Kingdom over some issues, but this difference has nothing to do with our friendship. We believe that Saudi Arabia carries its own weight in the region. It leads the GCC without any competitor over this position. We, in Qatar, believe in this fact. If there is a dispute over some issues, we always look to and derive our hopes from the wisdom of the custodian of the two holy mosques in resolving any conflict, even between us and them. It is not really a conflict, but a difference of opinion. However, we believe that this difference of opinion cannot develop into a conflict. Therefore, relations are stronger and greater than having a conflict between these two fraternal countries.

As for what the Bahraini heir apparent has told newspapers—it seems you have been following up on this subject—Qatar has never rejected Saudi mediation at any point in time. The brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia know very well that we always accept their mediation in this matter, proceeding from the memos, minutes, or agreements signed in 1990 during the Doha summit.

So the case will be heard by the court and when the mediator, Saudi Arabia, finds a solution satisfactory to both sides, the case will be withdrawn from the International Court of Justice. We are committed to this because we adhere to anything we sign or say and do not back down on it in the State of Qatar and this has been Qatar's policy.

Regrettably, the brothers in Bahrain sought to cast doubt on the accord signed in Doha or the proceedings as they call it. The paper that Qatar accepted contains the stipulation that the dispute be referred to the International Court of Justice. This stipulation was put forth by the Bahraini heir apparent to his highness the Qatari heir apparent at the time, and Qatar accepted it at the Gulf Cooperation Council summit for many reasons. First, the occupation of Kuwait and we had two options; either

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the summit fails or we agree on some concessions, which in this case was the Bahraini paper under which we agreed to go to the court to make the summit succeed because other issues, such as Kuwait, were worrying us and all the brothers in the GCC.

Once again, I am astonished at how things are misinterpreted, including going to the court. The brothers in Bahrain wanted to prove that the court has no jurisdiction over the case. This is their right and the court will have its say on the issue and we respect that. But it is being reported again that even if the court agreed to look into the dispute, we will not agree. Then why is the argument in the court for three or four years between us or between our lawyers and yours over the case? You are saying now that you do not accept your own paper, the paper that you have presented. You want to revoke everything you said at the court.

Actually, I feel that they have not made up their minds on a definite view, not even on this issue, while in Qatar we have a definitive stand on it. The case is in the International Court of Justice and we respect its verdict. We also respect the mediator's past and future efforts without mentioning his past efforts. We will honor what the mediator puts forward and our doors are open for considering anything under the Doha agreement. If a proposal is accepted by the two sides, we will naturally be pleased.

[Al-Misfir] There has been a plan. A GCC leader was entrusted with devising a study and presenting a project to build an army for the GCC, a unified army under a unified leadership with unified centers and commands whose ranks, distribution, deployment, and locations to be agreed upon. Has this force seen the light or will it do so in the short term or foreseeable future?

[Hamad] First, the country concerned... [pauses] His Majesty Sultan Qabus was entrusted with this task. He presented a very valuable report in this regard. He presented it when the iron was hot, as we say; that is to say, in the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Kuwait's liberation, and the GCC countries' failure to confront this invasion even in the first hours of the invasion.

Actually, this project has not seen the light despite our excellent assessment of it in Qatar. Of course, the plan was replaced by strengthening Desert Shield. Here again we must ask or tell the GCC defense ministers entrusted with Desert Shield: Before developing it, we must know why it did not move although it is a small force to confront the Iraqi invasion or why did it not even deploy to protect the GCC countries at the time?

Therefore, our defense ministers must first examine this shortcoming and then develop the Desert Shield but of course they know better than I do about this affair.

[Al-Misfir] We now move from this concern to another concern, which preoccupies Arabs and Muslims all over the world. It is the so-called peace offensive, or surrender if you wish, to Israel. Your Highness Shaykh Hamad, between us and the Israelis there is hostility. This hostility is mentioned in the Holy Koran. We have been hostile toward each other for approximately 1,415 years. We have been rejecting them and they have been rejecting us, ideologically and culturally. They are a rejected group in their European societies. A entity was created for them in the Holy Land—Palestine. Now there is a rush or a race toward Israel, in which Qatar is also participating.

[Hamad] [passage omitted] Qatar has not rushed. After the Madrid Conference, we agreed on the formation of ad hoc committees for the peace process: committees on normalization and on studying the future of the Middle East in the post-peace era and on how to develop this peace for the benefit of the nations of this region. Naturally, this idea was the brainchild of the Israelis because they have a strategic objective and we do not have one. Qatar has not established any kind of relations—gas, gas pipeline, and so forth. I will explain this point if you wish. We met with Israeli officials and publicized this at that time out of our faith that we do not work in secret but publicly. We do not want to cheat our citizens that we have declared policies and hidden policies.

This was done not as a rush toward Israel. This was done for several objectives. First, we want to know this enemy of over 50 years. We want to know what he thinks, what he wants for this region, and what his plans are for this region. We have fought this enemy for 50 years. We should know at least how this enemy thinks and what the reasons are for his success in his battle against us throughout these years. Second, I affirm to you that officials from several Arab states in the region have met with Israeli officials and have gone beyond this. However, this is their affair. Perhaps they have a policy not to announce this. I do not want to mention names or to speak about this subject. However, we in Qatar do not want to deceive our people or the Arab nation on anything. By the same token, we do not allow anyone to sell or peddle Qatar. If we have interests that will benefit our people, which will not harm the Arab world and the Arab nation and will be an incentive for the enemy to end his differences with Syria and Lebanon, we will do this thing. Naturally, we the Arabs are always afraid. We always boycott. In my view, the boycott is wrong. We must meet, discuss, argue, and disagree. If you do not approve something, face your adversary and do not agree with him. This is our policy. For this reason, we attended the multilateral talks and held a conference in Qatar on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It was said why, why, why did Qatar host this conference. Regrettably, most of those who said such things are our brothers in Bahrain. Bahraini newspapers spoke a lot on behalf of the Arab nation about this subject. Finally, we have found out that the environment conference was held in Bahrain.

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At least we have not said something and then gone back on it. We have done what we have said. It is not a rush. I believe in sitting with the enemy, reaching a direct understanding with him, and knowing his intentions as best as possible. [passage omitted]

[Al-Misfir] I go back again to Qatar and to its relations with Israel. Israel and Qatar want to build a gas pipeline between Elat and the Mediterranean. The press and some haters of Qatar say this project will create a dispute between Qatar and Egypt. They say that Qatar wants to stop using the Suez Canal and to open new routes to spite Egypt. What is your view on this subject?

[Hamad] [passage omitted] First of all, we have not thought of building a pipeline between us and Israel. We have not thought of making Elat a crossing point for Qatari products. If we wanted this, we would have announced it, according to the policy we pursue in Qatar. However, the issue has been stirred up in Egypt for reasons that I do not know. The issue has been stirred up in the Egyptian press, although we have explained to Egyptian officials that we have not discussed this subject with the Israelis. This issue has been stirred up and regrettably is still being stirred up. Naturally, we know that the revenues of the Suez Canal are decreasing with or without the pipeline, if such a pipeline is ever going to be built. We do not want anybody to use Qatar as a mantle on which they hang their problems. If someone has a problem inside his country, we do not want him to use Qatar as a mantle. If someone needs help from us regarding a certain problem, we are ready to help if we can. However, we do not accept that others blame their worries or problems on us.

We and Israel have not discussed the subject of the pipeline. Israel has asked to buy gas from Qatar. We told Israeli officials that if you want to sow discord between us and our brothers in Egypt, Egypt is closer to you and you can buy gas from it. They answered that according to Israeli strategic security they cannot accept one source of energy for Israel. They will buy from Egypt as a joint and strategic cooperation, buy from you or others, and buy from a third and fourth party. Israel cannot depend on one party. They have plans.

We told them that peace is not complete yet: there is Syria and Lebanon. Tangible progress must occur on these tracks before we can speak about cooperation. They have also asked to open offices for relations in the two countries. So far we have not made a decision on this request. Regarding gas, so far we have not made a final decision. The subject is undergoing a feasibility study. In the feasibility study we are not dealing directly with Israel for one reason, namely that Syria and Lebanon have not yet made peace with Israel. Therefore, nothing has been done regarding this subject but there are studies conducted by American companies on cooperation in this field. So far, there are studies and ideas in this field, which we do not deny. [passage omitted]

[Al-Misfir] I now move to what is known as the Damascus Declaration. There is a view that the United States is against the Damascus Declaration and that the United States has prohibited all the Gulf states from giving precedence or priority to Egypt and Syria. Is this true?

[Hamad] I do not believe this is true. From my position of responsibility, I know that on the contrary the United States has been urging the states of the region and the Damascus Declaration states to agree on a certain system by which they could at least defend the simplest issues in the region. However, I believe we, the Damascus Declaration states, have not taken the matter seriously and have not elevated this declaration. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Declaration Issued on Founding of CDLR

MS2802112395 London CDLR MONITOR in English 3 May 93

[Declaration on the Founding of the Committee For the Defense of Legitimate Rights (CDLR); issued on 3 May 1993—received by fax 28 February]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful Declaration of the Founding of the Committee For the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR)

Praise be to Allah and peace be upon his Prophet (PBUH): [Peace Be Upon Him]

Evidences from the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) have been unanimously supporting the necessity of keeping the human dignity and legitimate rights. Shari'ah also made it a duty for Muslims to support the oppressed and to remove injustice.

On the authority of al-Bara' Bin-'Azib, he said that the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) gave us seven instructions, one of them being: "the support of the oppressed". On the authority of Anas, he said that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Help your brother whether he is an oppressor or an oppressed one". A man said to the Prophet (PBUH): "O Prophet of Allah, I support him if he is oppressed, but how do I support him when he is the oppressor?" The Prophet (PBUH) said: "By preventing him from oppressing others, that is your support for him." On the authority of Ibn 'Umar, the Prophet (PBUH) said: "A Muslim is the brother of a fellow Muslim. He should neither commit oppression upon him nor ruin him, and he who meets the needs of a brother, Allah will meet his needs, and he who relieved a Muslim from hardship, Allah will relieve him from the hardships to which he would be put on the Day of Resurrection.....

The Islamic Shari'ah established the base for co-operation and organised action performing good deeds, and the Prophet (PBUH) praised the co-operation of some of the pre-Islamic era in the al- Fudul Alliance, for the sake of lifting oppression and removing injustice. The Prophet (PBUH) said: "If I was called to such an alliance in Islam, I would have joined".

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As scholars and students of Islamic knowledge should lead the practice of Islamic duties, we declare in this statement our preparation and readiness to participate by all the means at our disposal to help the removal of injustice, to support the oppressed and to defend the rights that were given to man by the Shari'ah.

Based on the above, if anyone would like to provide us with a case of oppression, or accurate information that would help us to facilitate the removal of injustice, give support to the oppressed or help us to defend legitimate rights, we are prepared to receive information on the addresses and telephone numbers written below.

We hope that scholars, officials and others will co-operate with us and with anyone who tries to remove injustice and help the oppressed .

In answer to what Allah said: "And co-operate on good deeds and piety" the Prophet (PBUH) said: "The Muslims are like one body of a person. If the eye is sore, the whole body aches, and if the head aches the whole body aches."

We ask Allah to make our intentions faithful to him and to bless our actions, and peace be upon his Prophet. Signed: 'Abdullah Bin-Sulayman al-Mas'ari 'Abdallah bin 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Jibreen Sulayman Bin-Ibrahim al-Rushud Hamad al-Sulayfah 'Abdallah al-Hamid 'Abdullah Bin-Humud al-Tawayjir Riyadh 3rd of May 1993

Pakistani President Leaves After Minor Pilgrimage

LD2702150495 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Medina, 27 Feb—His Excellency Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, left Medina at noon today after a visit to the kingdom, during which he performed the minor pilgrimage and paid homage at the mosque of the Prophet. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Foreign Ministry Source Welcomes Saudi-Yemeni Accord

JN2702142095 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0927 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 27 Feb (WAKH)—The United Arab Emirates has welcomed the memorandum of understanding that was reached between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Yemen in Mecca the day before yesterday.

A responsible Foreign Ministry source said that this agreement responds to the two countries' desire to settle their border differences through peaceful means, reflects the deep-rooted historic and fraternal ties between the two countries, and achieves their peoples' mutual interests.

The source added: On this occasion, the United Arab Emirates extends sincere congratulations to Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al- 'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and Yemeni President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih on this blessed step which will bolster solidarity among Arab states and guarantee security and stability in the region.

Yemen

Reaction to Accord With Saudi Arabia Continues

Opposition Criticizes Accord

NC2702160895 Paris AFP in English 1436 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Aden, Yemen, Feb 27 (AFP)—Yemen's main opposition party on Monday [27 February] blasted a declaration of principles signed between Sanaa and Riyadh to settle a bitter 60-year-old border dispute.

"It is a day of mourning and a fresh tragedy for the Yemeni people," the newspaper of the liberal Yemeni Unionist Rally party said Monday.

"The Mecca declaration sells off part of our territory to the profit of Saudi Arabia," the weekly Al-TAJAMMU' said.

"Our people must oppose this accord with all their political strength and use all means to prevent it being ratified by parliament."

The two Arab peninsula neighbours signed the 11-part declaration in the Saudi city of Mecca on Sunday after more than a month of difficult talks.

Under the agreement joint negotiating teams will be set up to demarcate sea boundaries and the land frontier from the Red Sea to Jabal al-Tha'r, northeast of Sanaa, as well as help normalise ties.

More talks will be held later to set out ways to demarcate the rest of the frontier eastward to Oman, which Yemen had demanded.

The Yemeni-Saudi border dispute, which has flared into armed clashes, focused on three provinces bordering northwest Yemen assigned to Saudi control by the Taif treaty in 1934.

Sunday's declaration stated that the two countries are attached to the "legitimate and binding nature" of the treaty, which Sanaa had argued had expired in 1992.

Delegation Head: Accord Marks End of 'Breach'

LD2702213395 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 27 Feb 95

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[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni parliament and head of the Yemeni delegation to the Saudi-Yemeni talks, has stated that the memorandum of understanding signed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen in Mecca two days ago aims at continued cooperation for the benefit of the two countries. In his view, the future course of bilateral relations between the kingdom and Yemen will be better.

Shaykh al-Ahmar said in a press statement after returning to Sanaa from Saudi Arabia today that the memorandum of understanding is seen as a first step, and will be followed by larger steps for the benefit of the two fraternal peoples which will restore harmony and cooperation to their previous status. He stressed that the signing of the memorandum of understanding marked the end of the breach in relations between the two countries.

Salih Receives Message From Turkey's Demirel

JN2602185395 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih today received a message from his brother, Turkish President Suleyman Demirel. The message deals with bilateral ties and Islamic and international developments.

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Reportage on Car Bomb in Zakho, Accusations

Tehran Reports Car Bomb

NC2702181495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1745 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A car-bomb explosion in Zakho, in Iraqi Kurdistan at dawn today, led to the death of 80 people. The Kurdish parties have accused the Iraqi intelligence service of being behind the blast.

Further Details on Bomb Reported

NC2702181995 Paris AFP in English 1753 GMT 27 Feb 95

[By Jo Biddle]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Feb 27 (AFP)—A massive car bomb on Monday [27 February] killed at least 80 people and wounded more than 100 others when it ripped through a busy shopping area in Zakho in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, officials said.

The bomb also destroyed several homes, 20 cars and 50 shops in the town bordering Turkey, Kurdish officials said.

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) official Kusrat Rasul, contacted by AFP in the main town of Irbil by telephone from Nicosia, blamed the attack on "Baghdad intelligence services."

Rasul said the bomb went off early Monday in the town in Dahuk province which is under the control of the PUK's rival Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

He gave the toll as at least 80 dead and more than 100 wounded in an attack which he condemned as an "odious crime."

Mas'ud Barzani's KDP and the PUK led by Jalal Talabani have been locked in a bitter power struggle for several months in which Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has offered to mediate.

A spokesman for the UNHCR in Geneva confirmed that a huge bomb had gone off in Zakho killing about 80 people, but said details were sketchy as UN personnel were based in Dahuk.

"It was definitely a big bomb which killed a lot of people. We have reports of about 80 dead," he said.

The opposition alliance the Iraqi National Congress (INC) in London also said a car bomb had exploded in the town causing at least 200 casualties, and destroying 20 cars and 50 shops.

And in Paris PUK spokesman Muhammad Isma'il said at least 80 had been killed and 150 wounded in the blast which destroyed several houses.

The area has been controlled by the Kurds in defiance of Baghdad since the end of the January-February 1991 Gulf War. Allied warplanes patrol an air exclusion zone imposed north of the 36th parallel to protect the Kurds from Saddam's forces, flying missions from a base in Incirlik, Turkey.

Rasul is the prime minister of the Kurdish government elected in 1991 but not officially recognised internationally. The PUK and KDP share power in the parliament based in Irbil.

A car bomb in Irbil's central market killed five people and injured 82, many of them children, on January 22, 1993.

There have been regular car bomb attacks in the region since the Kurds took control.

One targeted the official convoy of Daniele Mitterrand, the wife of French President Francois Mitterrand, during a visit to Iraqi Kurdistan in July 1992. Five people were killed in that blast.

Meanwhile, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported in Tehran on Monday that at least 100 people had been killed in clashes between rival Kurdish factions in the region in the past three days.

The agency said a "large number" of people had been injured in an attack Friday by the KDP and a Hezbollah party.

Intense clashes were underway Monday in the regions of Shaqlawah, Balisan and Raniyah, IRNA said. But the reports were denied by Rasul.

The PUK controls the areas of Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah while the KDP runs a strip along the frontier with Iran and the region of Dahuk.

Kurdish Factions Trade Accusations

NC2802114295 Paris AFP in English 1050 GMT 28 Feb 95

[By Tolle Aram]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Salah al-Din, Iraq, Feb 28 (AFP)—Rival Kurdish factions traded accusations Tuesday [28 February] over a devastating car bomb attack which killed 73 civilians and wounded 141 in the northern Iraqi town of Zakho.

Up to 200 kilogrammes (440 pounds) of TNT packed into a red Volkswagen Passat exploded Monday at the busy money exchange market in the dusty frontier town on the border with Turkey.

"Many of the dead were unrecognisable because they were so badly burnt in the blast," said Samir 'Abd-al-Rahman, a leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) which controls Zakho.

He said 73 civilians had been killed and 141 wounded in the blast which also destroyed homes, shops and other

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cars in the town which is the main crossing point from Turkey into Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq.

'Abd-al-Rahman blamed the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) led by Jalal Talabani for the unprecedented attack.

The PUK and the KDP, which is headed by veteran Kurdish leader Mas'ud Barzani, have been locked in a bitter power struggle for several months, and part of the conflict is over control of the region's money. The KDP collects lucrative customs duties at the border.

"It was the PUK who did it," 'Abd-al-Rahman charged here, saying the car was registered in PUK-controlled Irbil, the main town in northern Iraq.

He charged that on February 11 and February 21 the PUK had sent two car bombs to Salah al-Din but that the KDP had managed to defuse them. Talabani warned two weeks ago the PUK could wage an all-out war against the KDP areas.

But PUK radio hit back saying in a broadcast: "The bomb was sent from the Iraqi government.

"The KDP is on good terms with them therefore the KDP did not control the checkpoints properly."

A PUK spokesman in Europe, Muhammad Isma'il, also blamed the attack on Iraq saying that Baghdad's aim was "to broaden the conflict between the parties in Kurdistan and to push international and aid organisations to leave the region.

"The Kurdish groups have not got the technical means to mount such an attack."

Northern Iraq has been under Kurdish control since an uprising at the end of the January-February 1991 Gulf War in defiance of Baghdad but with the backing of a US-led alliance.

Allied warplanes patrol an air exclusion zone imposed north of the 36th parallel to protect the Kurds from Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's forces.

The allied Military Control Command has a headquarters in Zakho, which is also a base for several aid organisations.

Many of the dead in Monday's attack were likely to be businessmen who had come to trade dollars, Iraqi dinars and Turkish lire at the exchange, the busiest marketplace in the town.

The dead were buried later the same day, and 30 corpses charred beyond recognition were put in a mass grave.

Sources in Diyarbakir, Turkey, said Turkish lorry drivers were among the wounded. A 15-strong medical team was sent to Zakho early Tuesday from Sirnak in Turkey, police there said.

The PUK controls the areas of Irbil and al-Sulaymaniyah while the KDP runs a strip along the frontier with Iran and the region of Dahuk.

There have been frequent car bomb attacks since the Kurds took control, including one on a motorcade transporting Daniele Mitterrand, the wife of the French president, in July 1992 which killed five people.

Opposition Radio Reports Blast at Helicopter Base

LD2702151295 Tehran IRNA in English 1443 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ganaveh, Bushehr Prov., Feb. 27, IRNA—As a result of an explosion in a hide-out of the Iraqi regime's copters, some nine helicopters were completely destroyed, the "Voice of Iraqi People" announced Monday.

The radio added that the Iraqi regime had remained silent but witnesses had reported the explosion.

The radio did not mention any date, the causes of the explosion and other details related to the incident.

Commentaries, Statements Criticize Albright Tour

Ramadan: Tour Shows U.S. 'Isolation'

JN2702182195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1638 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Feb (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, and his accompanying delegation.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said that the premeditated U.S. hostility toward Iraq has become obvious to the whole world, particularly after Iraq's fulfillment of its commitments and its implementation of the unjust Security Council resolutions. Ramadan noted that Iraq is no longer isolated as the aggressors wanted, but it is still, as it was before, the shelter of the advocates of the values of justice and freedom, now that the Arabs and Muslims have increased their support for the principles and objectives for whose sake the people of Iraq have offered sacrifices.

The vice president added that the tour of certain countries by U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright with the aim of continuing the blockade on Iraq is evidence of the U.S. Administration's bankruptcy, isolation, and resort to cheap and ugly methods to impose its policies on countries, to interfere in other countries' internal affairs, and to force these countries to support its policies which aim at imposing hegemony on nations and plundering their resources.

The head of the PLO Political Department praised Iraq's epic-like steadfastness in the face of the most brutal and most comprehensive military aggression. He affirmed

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that this steadfastness and what has been achieved in terms of construction are the response to the enemies who were angered by the pan-Arab awakening and cultural plan based in Iraq, the honest defender of pan-Arab issues.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed the current Arab situation, the developments in the Palestinian arena, and the continuation of aggression against Iraq through the continuation of the blockade imposed on its people. The two sides also reiterated the importance of unifying Arab popular forces and activating their struggle to face all schemes and conspiracies concocted by the Zionists, the Americans, and their allies against the Arab nation, its future, and existence.

The meeting was attended by the ambassador of Palestine and the head of the Revolution Command Council Liberation Movements Office.

Paper: Tour Shows U.S. 'Disappointment'

JN2802105395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH has asserted that Albright's threat to use the veto in the event a proposal is submitted to the UN Security Council [UNSC] demanding a revocation of the sanctions unequivocally shows that the United States is isolated and might find itself compelled to take a unilateral, tendencious, and flagrant political position to ensure the perpetuation of the sanctions clamped on the Iraqi people.

In an article today entitled "The Unilateral U.S. Approach and the Impotent Embargo," the paper adds: By this unilateral, tendencious, and flagrant political position, the United States by itself will tear apart the covers of the "international coalition" and the UNSC it has long used to justify its stands. This bankrupt U.S. position shows the U.S. disappointment and isolation ahead of the periodic review of the sanctions in March.

AL-QADISIYAH goes on to say: The significant positive changes in the stands of permanent and nonpermanent members of the UNSC, in the stands of other world states, and in the stands of large sectors of the world public, which demand a revocation of the Iraq sanctions, have all prompted the Americans to ask their lackeys, the Al Sabah rulers, to make flagrantly public moves, which have been shamelessly manifested in Sabah al-Ahmad's tour of Europe and other world states that have expressed support for revoking the Iraq sanctions. This notoriously shows the Al Sabah rulers' acquiescence, as well as their willingness to jeopardize pan-Arab security at the behest of their U.S. masters, particularly since Iraq has recognized Kuwait.

The paper says: The fragile argument of the Al Sabah rulers and their inability to influence the positions of the countries their envoy visited has prompted Washington to make a similar effort. It did so when Clinton asked Madeleine Albright to visit UNSC member states, except Russia and France, whose positions in this regard are clear, in order to publicly and impudently ask them to adopt positions supportive of the continuation of the Iraq sanctions and of the continued starvation of the Iraqi people. Albright also asked the countries she visited to repeat the old discordant refrain regarding the so-called implementation by Iraq of the relevant UNSC resolutions.

The paper explains that many Western media organizations, including THE NEW YORK TIMES and the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC] have questioned the U.S. argument and its claims regarding the need for Iraq to comply with the relevant UNSC resolutions, particularly when a BBC Radio correspondent clearly asked Madeleine Albright during a news conference she held in Oman on the views that Washington has gone beyond the content of the relevant UNSC resolutions and is working to implement a U.S. policy bent on isolating Iraq, Libya, and other countries of the region.

The paper adds: The embarrassment of Albright's position also came into focus when she said in Muscat that the United States aims to "activate some UN resolutions so they may work better to the advantage of the Iraqi people," as she put it, particularly when this statement is viewed against the backdrop of the Omani demand that the Iraqi people's suffering be mitigated.

The paper goes on to say that such moves are usually made by weak and crisis-plagued nations; and this shows the weakness and illusory might of the United States as well as its slide toward decline. The paper compares this miserable, weak, and frenzied position to the belligerency of the United States, a superpower that previously sought to impose its unilateral hegemony on the world and control the world peoples' resources in the name of vindicating the new world order.

The paper adds: This bankrupt U.S. position reflects U.S. disappointment and isolation ahead of the next periodic review of the sanctions in March. It also comes against the background of the announcement made by Ekeus that he will submit his final report in April, and that his talks with the Iraqis were very good regardless of the other statements he made and positions he articulated. Several world states, such as Russia and France, have adopted firm positions demanding an end to the unfair Iraq sanctions, thus shunning the U.S. position. Moreover, Iraq is enjoying increasing international support for its just demand that the sanctions be lifted. Additionally, Iraq has received many international political delegations that are demonstrating sympathy with its plight, not to mention the current competition among foreign firms to visit Baghdad and explore the areas of possible economic and trade cooperation with Iraq in the future.

AL-QADISIYAH concludes its article by saying: What is more important than all of the above is our people's support for their historic leader Saddam Husayn as well

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as their continued struggle to promote their national production base, which is bound to someday render the blockade a thing of the past. There is no doubt that we will emerge victorious, and that we will experience relief from hardship.

English Daily Cited on 'Mission of Death'

JN2802115795 Baghdad INA in English 1030 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Feb 28, INA—U.S Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright is touring a number of UN Security Council's member states exerting pressure on these countries to build an anti-Iraq consensus within the Security Council ahead of the March review of the UN Security Council of the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq, THE BAGHDAD OBSERVER said today.

A paper editorial today added that the U.S. Administration and some other subservient regimes are no longer capable of convincing other countries of their unwarranted insistence on prolonging the suffering of Iraqis since Iraq has fulfilled all the U.S.-inspired UN provisions as stated in the anti-Iraq Security Council's resolutions.

For this reason, Albright is sent on a mission of death to keep the sanctions against Iraq in place. The theme of mission demonstrates the criminal nature of both the U.S. Administration and its messenger.

Otherwise, is Albright and her administration not aware of the fact that it is only the children, elderly, the sick, and the have-nots who are the victims of economic sanctions being imposed on Iraq for over four years now.

The U.S. Administration felt that it is no longer possible to confer international legitimacy on its anti-Iraq policy. So it is seeking some other accomplices.

This diplomatic move is prompted by the emerging harmony in the attitudes of some major powers such as France, Russia and China and some other member-states of the UN Security Council towards Iraq.

It has become clear that the U.S. is after its own interests trying to subdue the whole region with the aim of exploring and recycling oil revenues into U.S. and Western banks.

However, the Clinton Administration is deeply worried that some other parties that have followed U.S. policies towards Iraq blindly and without questioning its ulterior motives are now prepared to defy U.S. policy and attitudes regarding Iraq.

The U.S. Administration cannot require other states to sacrifice their interests by adopting policies conform to U.S. ones. Gone is the time when Albright used to get the approval of representatives of other states with a stroke of a pen.

The world is no longer ambivalent to the fact that the U.S. is nowadays haunted by neo-colonial tendency and Albright is acting as a messenger of death instead of being a bearer of bread and light.

But it seems that this vulgar woman is good at nothing other than being a boot ticker [as received] to members of U.S Administration. Since Iraqis expect no good from this woman and her administration, they will continue their endeavor to achieve self- sufficiency in the production of the basic commodities with heroic stubbornness rarely found in history. They will continue to build factory after factory and the roar of machines, tractors and bulldozers will continue to realize their goals, the paper concluded.

U.K. Group's Denouncement Cited

JN2702181595 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1605 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 27 Feb (INA)—The British Trans-Border Friends Organization has denounced the suspect U.S. attempts to continue the conspiracy of the unfair economic blockade that has been imposed on Iraq for more than four and a half years. Approximately 1 million people, mostly children, have been martyred as a result of the blockade.

In a statement to INA, Riyad al-Tahir, the organization's head, asserted that U.S. UN Representative Madeleine Albright's current tour of some UN Security Council member states, carrying messages from President Bill Clinton, confirms the isolation from which the United States is suffering as well as the fact that the United States alone is involved in the conspiracy of annihilating the steadfast Iraqi people who are suffering from acute shortages of food, medicine, and other necessary human needs due to the continued unfair blockade.

Al-Tahir added that Albright's tour, designed to rally support for the suspect U.S. position, also confirms the U.S. Administration's complete failure to receive support, even from its allies at the Security Council, for the continuation of the blockade, which has lost all its justifications, now that Iraq has fully responded to the United Nations.

He explained that the United States, which is launching a collective war of annihilation against the Iraqi people, has lost all justification and that it no longer has any more lies or fabrications to perpetuate the unfair blockade against Iraq, which has implemented all that is required of it in accordance with the Security Council resolutions.

Al-Tahir ridiculed the U.S. allegations and lies, as well as the U.S. Administration's fabrications against Iraq, and the U.S. attempt to impose demands that have nothing to do with the cease- fire resolutions, particularly fabricating the human rights lie and other false allegations.

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He wondered: What is the U.S. Administration's position on the human rights of the Iraqis who are suffering from the ugliest international blockade in mankind's history? This blockade is threatening an entire people with annihilation due to hunger and disease. Where was the U.S. Administration when it destroyed the Iraqi civil installations, particularly hospitals, places of worship, schools, and other installations, and when it used internationally-banned weapons against Iraq—weapons whose effects can still be seen?

Hugh Stevens [name as transliterated], coordinator of the Britain-based international committee investigating the continued economic blockade against Iraq, has condemned Albright's current tour, which is made at the instructions of her master Clinton and which is an attempt to obstruct the escalating heavy pressures put on the Security Council to lift the unfair blockade imposed on Iraq.

In a statement to INA, Stevens said that regardless of its attempts, the U.S. Administration cannot silence the Iraqi voice of justice, which is demanding that the blockade, which has been imposed for more than four and a half years, should be lifted and that Iraq should be allowed to pursue its pioneering and civilized international role.

He said the U.S. attempts to continue the unfair blockade are a total failure in view of the bright reality that was realized by the international community. This community has revealed the U.S. objectives designed to continue destroying Iraq and killing its proud people without any legal or ethical justification, he added.

Commentary Compares Albright, Zhirinovskiy Visits

NC2702192795 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1547 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the same time Madeleine Albright, U.S. delegate to the United Nations, is visiting a number of world states to win support for the extension of international sanctions against the Baghdad regime until it complies with all UN resolutions, Russian extremist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy arrived in Baghdad to lead a campaign aimed at winning support for Saddam Husayn and lifting the embargo imposed on his regime.

On arrival in Baghdad, Zhirinovskiy asserted that international sanctions must be lifted immediately. He called on Arab leaders to join Russia in what he described as an alliance against the West.

We will try here to run a comparison between Mrs. Albright's personality and the importance of her visit and Zhirinovskiy's character and the significance of his visit to Iraq.

Mrs. Albright is a democratic person, while Zhirinovskiy is an extremist who is blindly biased in favor of the Russian race. Mrs. Albright fully believes in and defends the principles of human rights, while Zhirinovskiy pays no attention whatsoever to human rights and shows no sympathy toward people. In some of his statements, he has gone as far as saying that some people do not deserve to live.

Mrs. Albright's visit is an official one, since she is the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, while Zhirinovskiy's visit is not official. Mrs. Albright is visiting a number of world states to win support for maintaining the sanctions against the Iraqi regime and ultimately rescuing the Iraqi people from Saddam's fangs and his bloody regime. Zhirinovskiy's visit aims to support Saddam's dictatorship and stand in the way of the Iraqi people's aspirations.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy grants the Russian race all the rights, denying all other peoples the same rights. He believes that granting other people these rights is an unforgivable sin. Mrs. Albright is a civilized, prominent character who is biased in favor of no race or nationality. She believes in people's right to self-determination and is leading a campaign in this tour to curb the suffering of the Iraqi people in all their types and races.

Thus, there is a big difference between the two characters and the two visits. However, we would like to ask Saddam Husayn and his bloody regime what Zhirinovskiy and his likes can achieve for their dying regime when world efforts are being consolidated to compel the dictatorship to implement the UN resolutions and save the Iraqi people from the claws of the dictatorship. Has Saddam Husayn forgotten that Zhirinovskiy is unwanted worldwide, even in Russia, because his thinking is built on [word indistinct] the glories of the Russian empire and on fighting all the states that broke away from the empire and the Soviet Union and returning them to Russian control by force?

We are certain that people like Saddam Husayn and Zhirinovskiy only meet to threaten peace and stability in the world and the region. They will certainly go away sooner or later.

Russia's Zhirinovskiy, Delegation Continue Visit

Saddam Receives Zhirinovskiy

JN2702155895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1510 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Feb (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has received Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party and head of the party's bloc in the Russian Parliament, as well as two members of the delegation accompanying Zhirinovskiy; namely, Klashtkov Serge [name as transliterated], head of the labor committee in the parliament, and Kisilov Vigslav Viktorov [name as transliterated], member of parliament.

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The meeting was attended by National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih.

Oil Minister Meets Russian Businessmen

JN2702152295 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1109 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Feb (INA)—Iraqi Oil Minister Dr. Safa' Hadi Jawad today met with the team of Russian businessmen currently visiting Iraq as part of the parliamentary delegation led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the [Russian] Liberal Democratic Party.

During the meeting, they reviewed the relations of cooperation with the Russian companies in the industrial and oil fields in a way that will serve the interest of both friendly countries.

The meeting was attended by the Oil Ministry under secretary and a number of officials working in the oil sector.

Finance Minister Meets Russian Official

JN2702164795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1230 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 27 Feb (INA)—Finance Minister Ahmad Husayn today met with Aleksandr Ivanovich Koziryov [name as transliterated], deputy head of the International Economic League and member of the Russian Parliament.

During the meeting, the minister reviewed the Iraqi people's suffering due to the continued unfair blockade imposed on them. This blockade aims to deny Iraqi women, children, and the elderly food and medicine, he added.

The Russian official stressed his country's serious desire to promote relations with Iraq in a way that will serve the interests of both friendly peoples.

Opposition: Saddam Hiding Bacteriological Weapons

AU2702151395 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 27 Feb 95 p 132

[Unattributed report: "Bacteriological Threat"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite the UN requirements regarding the destruction of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the development of bacteriological weapons is continuing in secret: Almost 30 liters of bacteriological cultures, among other things, was discovered in the al-Hakam [spelling as published] desert plant, 70 miles southwest of Baghdad: cholera, tuberculosis, and plague bacteria, together with the necessary fermentors and centrifuges to process the micro-organisms into toxic weapons. According to Iraqi opposition circles, even now Saddam Husayn has about 200 of these bacteriological bombs, some of which carry particularly insidious anthrax spores. These bacteria, which are lethal within three days of inhalation, are largely heat-resistant, and thus particularly suited for bacteriological warheads. Even the necessary missiles are available again: Not far from his native town of Tikrit, Saddam Husayn is said to have hidden more than 80 intermediate-range Scud-R17 and Al-Husayn-type missiles with a range of 400 miles.

Authorities Reportedly Close al-Kazimiyah

JN2702212195 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1815 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamic opposition factions have recently launched a number of successful attacks against the dens of the criminal 'Aflaqites in the holy city of al-Kazimiyah during the second half of the blessed month of Ramadan. The attacks targeted some party organizations and the regime's repressive offices in the center of al-Kazimiyah and in al-Hurriyah, al-Shu'lah, and al- Rahmaniyah quarters, which are close to the holy city.

Informed sources added that as a result of these revolutionary operations the bloody regime closed the yard of the Imam al-Kazim Mosque from 2000 until 0800 tomorrow. The regime also deployed gangs of the so-called emergency forces at the entrances of the al-Kazimiyah cemetery to frighten visitors and citizens and to prevent them from performing night prayers in the sacred al-Kazimiyah, which is always full of visitors on the nights of the blessed Ramadan, which is waited for by the sons of our people each year at this holy place.

PLO's Faruq Qaddumi Arrives on Visit

JN2502163895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1628 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Feb (INA)—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, last night arrived in Baghdad leading a delegation on a visit to the country which will last for several days.

A source in the Palestinian delegation told INA the delegation will hold consultations with several Iraqi officials on the latest developments in the Arab arena and ways to achieve Arab solidarity and coordination to confront the threats facing the Arab nation.

Meets With Tariq 'Aziz

JN2602143795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1355 GMT 26 Feb 95

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[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 26 Feb (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and official in charge of the Arab liberation movements office, has received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, and the delegation accompanying him.

During the meeting, they reviewed the current Arab situation, particularly in the Palestinian arena. They also stressed the importance of solidarity among the national and pan-Arab forces to counter the dangers and challenges threatening the Palestine question in particular and the Arab nation in general.

The meeting was attended by the Palestinian ambassador in Baghdad and the director of the Arab liberation movements office at the Revolution Command Council.

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Rabin Addresses Knesset on Lifting of Closure

TA2702165995 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 3 Network in Hebrew 1430 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Statement by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to the Knesset plenum in response to four opposition no-confidence motions over lifting of the closure on the territories—live; Rabin's remarks constantly interrupted by heckling]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Speaker, Knesset members [MK's], I wish to open my remarks by greeting MK Zvulun Hammer on his recovery and to wish him good health, which is not linked to the differences of opinion between us. I would like the Knesset debate on terrorism to be conducted in a serious fashion. It is not an American soap opera; it is an existential problem for Israelis. Therefore, it is proper for us to reflect here on what that terrorism is, what its aim are, what its modus operandi is, and how we respond to it.

We are currently in the midst of an effort to resolve the longest conflict within the framework of the Israeli-Arab dispute, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It began in May 1989 at the initiative of the previous national unity government, went on to the Madrid conference, and is continuing. In the face of the effort to resolve the problem, extremist elements have surfaced among the Palestinians—first and foremost, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad, as well as the Palestinian rejectionist organizations—whose commands are located in Syria and Lebanon. Their aim is to kill Israelis simply for being Israelis, but above all, their aim is to torpedo the opportunity that started with the signing of the Declaration of Principles and continued with the Cairo agreement, which led to the implementation of the first stage, the Gaza-Jericho First accord. I will highlight that with very painful data. For most of 1993, when all the Palestinian organizations, including the PLO, acted as terrorist bodies, 62 Israelis in uniform and civilians were killed and murdered. The division, however, is interesting. Forty-four of them were killed in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, and 18 inside sovereign Israel, including united Jerusalem. That is important in order to clarify the aims of the extremist organizations—Hamas and Islamic Jihad. In 1994, the picture had completely changed. Most of the terrorist campaign was conducted inside sovereign Israel. That is why in 1994, 69 Israelis in uniform and civilians were killed and murdered, 51 of them in sovereign Israel and 18 in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. That is no coincidence; it is aimed at serving a clear political objective, because they know that most of the inhabitants of Jewish Israel reside inside the State of Israel, and they want to undermine the feeling of personal security.

The problem is the desire of those elements—Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and to a lesser extent the rejectionist organizations, but not those subservient to 'Arafat—to perpetrate murderous attacks. Their aim is to foil any chance to resolve the problem. That is the issue.

Although there is no comparison, I understand that there are also Israelis who oppose the peace process.

[Responding to indistinguishable heckling by Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu] The current Likud leader was not even an MK when the late Mr. Begin made peace and returned all of the Sinai and uprooted all the settlements there. You were not here, and you never held any cabinet post with defense responsibility, so sit still, sit still. It was lucky for the State of Israel that the late Mr. Begin and not you headed the government then.

The ugly Islamic wave—which includes Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hizballah from Lebanon, international terrorism, and attacks against moderate Arab regimes—is aimed at torpedoing the chance for peace.

The modus operandi of the extremist Muslim elements—the first signs of which we noticed in 1993—namely suicide attacks, have become a central problem in dealing with terrorism. During 1994, 38 out of 69 Israeli terror victims were killed in suicide attacks. One attack was in Gaza, but the other attacks—in 'Afula, Hadera, and Tel Aviv—were perpetrated out of Israeli-controlled area. It was proven in 1993 that a closure cannot prevent, rather only reduce the level of harm done to Israeli citizens. On the other hand, it increases the danger to Israelis in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. Why is this so? Because once we prevent the entrance of Palestinians workers to Israel, when they have nothing else to do, the unrest increases and there is more temptation to join terror organizations, and there are many attacks. This was the case in 1993, when there was a long closure. The residents of sovereign Israel were harmed less, but Israelis traveling in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip suffered more. We have to strike a balance in the security considerations between these two areas.

The intermixing caused by settlements located in densely populated areas and the movement of Palestinians from the territories into Israel have become a heaven for terrorists. Without a long-term separation between Israel—albeit not in the 1967 borders—and a Palestinian entity existing by its side, there will be no solution to the conflict and no end to terrorism.... [responding to indistinguishable heckling] I understand this, and I said as much prior to the elections; I have not misled anybody. I have said that we need such a political and economic separation.

I have heard the ridiculous plan of the Likud chairman. It is preferable that he refrain from raising it, because it has no partner, no beginning, no objective. You have no proposal for a solution. What are you talking about? Without a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict there will be no end to terrorism, and if we do not find a Palestinian partner for dealing with extremist Islam in the shape of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad.... [pauses due to heckling] Let me reiterate that I am proud for having taken the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers out of the streets of Gaza, the alleys of Jabalyah, Khan

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Yunus, Rafah, Dayr al-Balah, the al-Burayj camp, and other places. We have decreased the number of casualties there. I understand you want to return the IDF to Gaza, Jabalyah, al-Shati', and all the other places from which the IDF soldiers are glad to have withdrawn. What are you proposing? You want Greater Israel and the 2.4 million Palestinians who will join us.

Knesset Members, this plan has its difficulties, but it is aimed at solving the problems. Without the agreement with the PLO we would not have achieved the peace treaty with Jordan, there would have been no openness in the Arab world, which various factors are indeed trying to check. Without all of this there would have been no chance for peace. You have no plan, no ideas; what you say is totally removed from the situation on the ground.

You in the Likud had one important leader who knew how to reach peace, even if he had to pay a painful price for it. Today you have a leader who will never be able to do this, who will never be able to make any decision. All he can do is criticize others.

We stand firm in our position; we are taking into account the security considerations of Israelis within sovereign Israel as well as in the territories, where you scattered settlements without taking into account the security of the settlers living there. Today the IDF must devote most of its forces not to safeguarding Israel's security, rather to providing security for the settlers—less for fighting terrorism than for protecting children traveling there.

Dear friends, your entire settlement plan in the densely populated Palestinian areas does not contribute anything to security; it is a security burden on the IDF soldiers.... [indistinguishable heckling] Not in the confrontation lines, not Ma'ale Adumim, Betar, Giv'at Ze'ev, Efrat, and the 'Etzyon Bloc, nor the settlements along the Green Line. I am referring to the small settlements scattered within the densely populated areas. Do they contribute anything to the security, or do they, on the contrary, require us to divert huge forces from the war against extremist terrorism?

All this talk of yours is not backed up by any plan and leads nowhere. It is simply unfruitful criticism. You can bring up Churchill and Baldwin or anybody else you want to [referring to Likud Chairman Netanyahu's speech]. Israel is currently headed by a government leading the country toward peace. It has proven this by achieving a peace treaty with Jordan and by starting to solve the Israeli-Palestinian problem. It will continue in this course, and you will not be able to do anything about it. If you want to return to Gaza, why don't you ask the public who wants to return to Gaza?

To date only a Likud government has achieved peace for the price of withdrawing until the last centimeter of land.

I want the Knesset to note that this government has a policy that has borne fruit. There are difficulties, but on the other hand, we have peace with another Arab country 16 years after peace was achieved with the first country. I recommend treating the Likud chairman's remarks with the seriousness they deserve.

No-Confidence Motions Against Government Rejected

TA2702174395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Knesset plenum rejected by 59 to 48 the no-confidence motions presented by the opposition factions. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] voted with the opposition.

Following the vote, the prime minister called on the Knesset to endorse the appointments of Ministers 'Uzi Bar'am and Shim'on Shetrit as interior and religious affairs ministers.

Rabin Opposes Palestinian State, City Center Withdrawal

TA2702143795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who conferred with Peace Now today, told them that he opposes the establishment of a Palestinian state within the framework of a permanent settlement, Rabin's media adviser confirmed to our correspondent Gil Litman.

In the meeting, the prime minister reiterated that he supports the separation between the Palestinian and Israeli entities.

Mr. Rabin rejected the Peace Now proposal to withdraw from the Judaea and Samaria city centers and to evacuate 26 small Jewish settlements.

Rabin Criticizes Partial U.S. Write-Off of Jordan's Debt

TA2702193395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rabin criticized a decision by a House of Representatives subcommittee to write off only $50 million of Jordan's debt. Jordan asked the United States to write off $275 million this year, but Secretary of State Christopher succeeded in convincing Congress to write off only $50 million. Rabin said the decision harms the peace process, which could collapse without U.S. dollars.

Beilin Comments on Importance of Christopher Visit

TA2702124695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin said today that if Warren Christopher fails to

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budge the negotiations with Syria next week we will apparently have to wait for a breakthrough with Damascus until after the elections in the United States and Israel at the end of 1996.

[Begin Beilin recording] First, I have not yet heard that the direct talks on the track pursued to date—between the ambassadors in Washington—have resumed.

Second, I voiced my doubts as to whether the Syrians have made a strategic decision and to date I am far from being sure that the Syrians made such a strategic decision. I could definitely assume that theirs is only a tactical decision.

Third, I think we are now seeing the last months during which a breakthrough is possible. I do not believe that toward the end of this year, definitely not next year, it will be possible to have real negotiations with the Syrians, mainly in view of the approaching elections, both in the United States and in Israel.

Therefore, I attach great importance to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's upcoming visit next week. I believe that if there is any chance of promoting the issue this may only be done by the Americans, because at this point the Syrians are not prepared to talk to us at a senior level. If Christopher manages to alter the situation and ascertain that the other side is really willing to attain peace with us, I think a breakthrough is possible. Otherwise, it is important that we learn the truth. [end recording]

Security Motives Said Behind Blockade on Lebanon

TA2502184995 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Feb 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has extended the naval blockade on the Lebanese ports, Lebanese news agencies reported today. [passage omitted]

Military sources have told our army affairs correspondent Alon Ben-David that the Lebanese Government is sponsoring Hizballah activities and interfering with security zone residents who try to travel to northern Lebanon. The military sources noted that security considerations are behind the blockade. [passage omitted]

Attorney General Against Police-Settlers Patrols

TA2702122795 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Feb 95 p 8

[Report by Ori Nir]

[FBIS Translated Text] Attorney General Mikha'el Ben-Ya'ir yesterday ordered the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and police to immediately halt joint patrols by Jordan Valley settlers and the Judaea and Samaria District Police forces. At the same time he directed them to prepare for the the establishment of a Civil Guard unit among the Jordan Valley settlers aimed at safeguarding their agricultural assets. A report to this effect was issued yesterday by the Judaea and Samaria District Police.

The meeting was held yesterday at Ben-Ya'ir's office in the wake of complaints about ad-hoc operational cooperation between settlers and Israel Police. Ben-Ya'ir ordered those present, among them IDF and police officers, their legal advisers, and representatives of the Jordan Valley settlers, to halt the joint patrols in their present form.

At the same time Ben-Ya'ir directed them to set up Civil Guard units ("permanent Civil Guard") similar in nature to those operating in Israeli agricultural settlements. The volunteers, residents of the Jordan Valley settlements (from the Jordan Valley Regional Council and the Megilot Regional Council), will patrol attired in Border Police uniforms and will be under the direct command of the Border Police officers in their region. They will patrol their agricultural fields at nights in order to prevent agricultural theft, which has proliferated recently.

Police Motorcyclists To Fight Crime in Jerusalem

TA2702132995 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 27 Feb 95 p 8

[Report by Doron Me'iri]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israel Police are setting up a motorcycle unit to fight terror and crime in Jerusalem. The special unit will initially consist of 30 policemen and 12 motorcycles.

A senior police source said last night that the decision to set up the unit came in light of assessments that as part of "the war for Jerusalem" the capital will soon become the target of murderous terror attacks. Police officers believe that the motorcycles will largely improve the response time of the policemen since they will enable them to circumvent traffic jams and obstacles.

The motorcyclists were recruited from police special patrol units. Most of them served in IDF [Israel Defense Forces] combat units.

The unit will issued Kawasaki KLE-500's. These are speedy and highly-maneuverable motorcycles which perform well both on roads and on rugged terrain. Each motorcycle will carry two policemen equipped with special flak jackets, pistols, short-barreled M-16 rifles, and suitable clothing such as helmets, thick leather suits, and special gloves.

Training the unit calls for a big effort because its members will have to become proficient in driving on roads and rugged terrain, be physically fit, and have a high level of combat skills, including sharpshooting while

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riding. Since the motorcycles have not yet been received, the policemen are at the moment training on...scooters.

The officer in charge of training the unit is Assistant Commander Avi Feder, chief of the Jerusalem District Police's operations staff who is a veteran of the IDF's elite commando unit and an expert motorcyclist. The police are also using well-known experts in the area.

Former German Prisoner Says Ron Arad in Evin Jail

NC2702074995 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0415 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A German citizen who was once detained in the Iranian jail of Evin has announced that an Israeli airman, doubtlessly Ron Arad, was held at the same prison with him.

The newspaper FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG reported that the German (Kubilay Mimili), who was arrested in April 1994 and was held in custody on espionage charges until 30 January 1995, learned two weeks before his release that a non-Iranian person had been held in isolation in one of the jail's wings for a long time. The German, who discovered this fact during recreation time in the jail courtyard, added that this person might have been an Israeli pilot downed over Lebanon and transported to Iran.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG revealed that communications had taken place between Israel and Iran to obtain Arad's release.

Stock Exchange Plunges to Lowest Level in 2 Years

TA2802100395 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 28 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Neil Cohen]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Shares on the Tel Aviv stock exchange plunged again yesterday after the bounce on Sunday [26 February], falling to their lowest level in more than two years. They now stand only a fraction above the level when the current government took office.

Traders attributed the fall to disappointment that the Bank of Israel had said after yesterday's cabinet meeting that there were no more interest rate cuts in the pipeline at this stage. However, others said forecasts of an impending recession had brought on the gloom.

The Mishtanim or Two-Sided index of widely traded stocks fell by 3.39 percent to 146.83 points. The Ma'of index of the largest stocks fell by 3.33 percent to 146.89 points. Turnover remained light at NIS [new Israeli shekel] 71.8 million.

Bonds, however, continued the recovery begun on Sunday and there were rises in CPI-linked bonds of all maturities, including longer-dated issues.

NRP, Tzomet Submit No-Confidence Motion

TA2802101895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Religious Party [NRP] and Tzomet have submitted a no-confidence motion against the government against the backdrop of what they term the collapse of the stock market and the capital market crisis. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the Knesset will debate the motion on 6 March. The Likud and Moledet will decide this afternoon whether to join the motion.

Correction to Defense Minister Interviewed

WA2802150895

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Defense Ministry Director General Interviewed," published in the 24 February Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT, pages 47-49:

Page 48, column one, seventh paragraph, first sentence make read: ...We are preparing ourselves under the present limitations and at the same....(clearing garbled words)

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Reportage on Attack on French Diplomat Continues

Muslim Brotherhood Denies Involvement

JN2802102095 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Feb pp 1, 16

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The State Security Court prosecutor is still investigating the attack on the French diplomat in the al-Mawjib area on Friday [24 February].

The prosecutor yesterday heard the testimony of Mrs. Florence Hein [name as transliterated], 31, wife of the French Embassy's second secretary. She said that while she and her husband were at the al-Mawjib rest-house in al-Karak taking photographs at around 1230, she saw two men standing in front of them. One of them was carrying a revolver and started to shout. She said the two men then asked them to get into their car and that one of them scuffled with her husband. She said that neither she nor her husband were violating the sanctity of the holy month of Ramadan. [passage omitted]

In another development, the Muslim Brotherhood condemned the attack on the French diplomat and stressed that it had nothing to do with the incident.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Muslim Brotherhood said that it "had nothing whatsoever to do with the incident, which we condemn." The Brotherhood stressed that "its policy and position are based on rejecting all means, forms, and sources of violence." It said that its followers' opposition of the "peace treaty and its requirements is expressed by nonviolent means." Therefore, it believes that "the attack was no more than an isolated incident." The Brotherhood called on "official and popular bodies to deal with the incident accordingly and within its proper framework. Its causes and motives should be examined so that lessons can be drawn." It said: "The security and stability of our homeland and people and boosting national unity among its sons are the Brotherhood's major concern in Jordan."

French Embassy Issues Statement

JN2802122295 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 95 p 3

["Text" of statement issued by the Embassy of France in Amman on 20 February "on the shooting incident in Wadi al-Muyib"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The French embassy wishes to highlight the following explanations about the assault last Friday, Feb. 24, on French Embassy Second Secretary Gilles Hein and his wife:

—The assault lasted for a period of 20 minutes from 12:30 noon until 12:50.

—Mr. and Mrs. Hein were taking photos at the resthouse overlooking Wadi Mujib, about 100 kilometres south of Amman, when they were attacked by two persons and there was nothing in the way the two French people dressed or behaved that prompted the attack. Mr. and Mrs. Heins were not eating, drinking or smoking and did not carry any foods or drinks. Generally, embassy staff members in Jordan know the local customs and are keen to respect them.

—The French embassy does not at the present have details about the motives of the assailants, and the concerned Jordanian authorities are still investigating the incident.

—The primary evidence we have (especially that the young married couple were at the place in an unplanned manner) affirm that France or the French interests were not targetted by the attack.

—Mr. Hein underwent primary checkups and X-rays at Madabah Hospital and then was transported by a Jordanian Armed Forces helicopter to al-Husayn Medical Centre. He then underwent a highly-professional, six-hour surgery there. The medical care he received at the centre was exceptional and Mr. Hein is no more in danger and is currently recuperating at the centre.

—The Jordanian authorities have showed interest in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Hein and towards the French embassy throughout the ordeal. This manifests the friendship relations existing between the two countries. The French community in Jordan was moved by all the solidarity initiatives taken and expressed by several Jordanian citizens.

U.S. Moves To Write Off Jordanian Debts Outlined

JN2502103195 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Feb 95 p 1, 7

[Article by staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The Clinton Administration, in line with its commitment to Jordan, has taken the step of proposing to Congress a measure that will allow it to write off $488 million of the Kingdom's debts to the U.S. in fiscal 1995, a senior official said Friday.

Rania 'Atallah, head of the Jordan Information Bureau (JIB) in Washington, said the measure was contained in a "Fiscal Year 1995 Supplemental" that the administration presented to Congress last week.

Ms. 'Atallah said the proposal was in the form of seeking outlays of $275 million, which will technically allow the administration write off up to $488 million of Jordan's debts.

Washington has promised a write-off of $702 million to Jordan's debts to the U.S. spread over three years and wrote off $220 million—the first tranche of the cancellation—in fiscal 1994. The rest was supposed to have been canceled in two tranches, in fiscal 1995 and 1996,

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but Washington has moved to do so in one tranche by proposing in the FY 1995 supplemental, Ms. 'Atallah explained.

The move to cancel the entire remainder in one tranche in fiscal 1995 was promised to Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti two weeks ago when he visited Washington and held talks with Secretary of State Warren Christopher and other officials.

Ms. 'Atallah, in a telephone interview with the JORDAN TIMES, said the FY 1995 supplemental, which is not linked to direct American economic or military aid, was considered by the House of Representatives Appropriations Sub-Committee on Foreign Operations on Thursday.

The sub-committee reduced the outlay for the write-off of the Jordanian debt to $50 million from the requested $275 million, but in real terms of the American legislative process this move means very little, Ms. 'Atallah said.

"It is a seven-stage process that has started at the sub-committee level," she said. The bill has to go through the full appropriation committee, then the full House of Representatives before moving on to the Senate appropriations sub-committee, the full Senate and then a possible conference between the Senate and the House of Representatives to bridge gaps, she said.

As such, "the $50 million that the House sub-committee approved is not at all the bottom line," she stressed, adding that even the approval for the $50 million clears the way for "a larger write- off. The figure depends on the technical side of the process."

"The final outcome of the (proposed measure) could very well be very different from what it looks like today," said Ms. 'Atallah, indicating that the administration would ensure that the full allocation is made in the bill in its final form.

She noted that the very fact that the administration proposed the write-off of the entire remainder of the promised cancellation of Jordan's debts in one tranche rather than the previously promised two was a reflection of Washington's commitment and seriousness to live up to its pledge.

"There is every seriousness on the part of the administration to see that the process goes through as originally proposed," she said.

The sub-committee reduction of the outlay was part of cuts of $191 million it introduced to the FY 1995 Supplemental as part of a Republican budget-slashing to pay for disaster aid, mostly in California, and make good on the Republican Party's promises of tax cuts.

According to Washington watchers, the Republicans, who now dominate the House of Representatives after a 40-year hiatus, are traditionally known to be "fiscally conservative" and are seen as less sensitive to the impact of foreign aid cuts on American foreign policy than the Senate, and therefore the reduction proposed by the sub-committee was not unexpected.

But it will be "a different story" in the Senate according to experts.

"The Senate can relate more to foreign policy issues and the importance of aid," said an expert on internal American politics. "It is easier for the administration to deal with the Senate on foreign policy and aid issues that with the House of Representatives."

Furthermore, there is widely shared consensus that the U.S. Congress as a whole appreciates Jordan's contribution to the Middle East peace process and the difficulties facing the Kingdom in its endeavours to meet the requirements of peace after signing the Oct. 26 peace treaty with Israel.

The net assessment of experts is that Jordan does not really have to worry about the promised write-off of debts and that the Clinton administration would make the necessary moves in the "give-and-take" deals that cap the process of foreign appropriations between the House of Representatives and the Senate.

In the meantime, the administration has also proposed economic and military aid to Jordan worth $44.2 million—$31.2 million in military aid, $7.2 million in economic support assistance and $5.2 million in population assistance—in fiscal 1996. The proposal was contained in the draft budget for FY 1996 that the administration sent to Congress last week.

The amount reflects "a considerable increase" over the corresponding figure for FY 1995, noted the expert.

The U.S. lawmakers have not taken up debate on the draft budget yet.

$15 Million Loan Accord Signed With U.S.

JN2702182895 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jordan and the United States have signed an agreement under which the U.S. will offer a $15 million soft loan to Jordan to finance a purchase of wheat and corn from U.S. sources.

The agreement was signed by Finance Minister Basil Jardanah and U.S. Ambassador Wesley Egan.

The credit will be used to buy 60,000 tonnes of wheat and 45,000 tonnes of corn. The loan, which carries 2 percent interest for the first seven years, and 3 percent thereafter, will be repaid in 24 annual installments beginning in 2002.

Minister Urges Israel To Implement Oslo, Cairo Accords

JN2602150995 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Feb pp 1, 4

[Report by Salamah Ni'mat]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti warned yesterday that Jordan will not be able to build and entrench real peace within the framework of the peace treaty with Israel in isolation from meeting its social, economic, and political commitments to the citizens of Jordanian.

Al-Kabariti told AL-HAYAH that the official government commitment to implement the peace treaty is a standing commitment, but this commitment should be in line with the people's feeling that peace is helping to improve their standard of living within the framework of "the social contract between the state institutions and the people."

He emphasized that Jordan is not acting in isolation from the international situation and regional effects, and said that Israel should implement its commitments to the Arab parties with whom it has signed agreements, and stressed that what is going on in the Palestinian arena certainly influences the Jordanian arena, and the failures on the Palestinian-Israeli tracks are certainly reflected on the Jordanian-Israeli track.

Al-Kabariti expressed hope that the Israeli side will honor its commitment to implement the Oslo and Cairo agreements so that the Palestinian Authority can, in turn, implement its commitments.

Commenting on statements by Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in which he said it is impossible to make peace under the threat of terrorism, he said "terrorism does not justifies terrorism from the other side." He said this Israeli position is way of finding pretexts to stop the peace process. He said "the Israeli threat to stop the peace process as a result of violent actions by the hard-line organizations is actually directing the opponents on how to abort the peace process."

He expressed the belief that the Israeli position on the Palestinian track shows that "there is no policy, but merely reactions that are directly linked to the Israeli elections." Al- Kabariti added that reaching peace agreements with Israel does not relieve the international community of its responsibilities, represented in perpetuating peace through extending balanced political and economic assistance.

It is worth noting that Jordanian political circles have recently increased their expressions of dissatisfaction because the economic situation has not improve although Jordan continues to implement the International Monetary Fund [IMF] terms, continues to implement economic sanctions imposed on Iraq, and continues to support the Oslo and Cairo agreements, in addition to the signing of the peace treaty with Israel.

Official sources emphasized that the economic situation has not seen any noteworthy improvement, in addition to the continuation of the pressures related to the economic blockade imposed on Iraq, the Arab boycott of Jordan [as published], the absence of foreign aid, and the continuation of economic austerity measures agreed upon with the IMF.

Foreign Ministry Reportedly Establishing Israel Department

TA2702103695 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 24 Feb 95 p 7

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, the AL-NAHAR office—Informed diplomatic sources here have said that the Jordanian Government has decided to set up a special department, called the Israel Department, in the Foreign Ministry in order to follow up on Israeli affairs.

The sources added that this department is to include employees who are now working on their own because of a lack of resources to aid them in their research and studies.

Al-Mu'ashshir Sworn In as Ambassador to Israel

JN2702182695 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, was sworn in before His Majesty King Husayn at the Royal Hashemite Court today on the occasion of his appointment as ambassador for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the State of Israel.

The ceremony was attended by Hashemite Court Chief Marwan al- Qasim and Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti.

Bahraini Minister Gives Thanks for Mediation Statement

JN2502180495 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Bahraini Government has thanked the Jordanian Government for its statement on Saudi mediation between Bahrain and Qatar.

This came during a telephone call received today by Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti from Bahraini Foreign Minister His Highness Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah. During the call, they stressed the importance of unifying and coordinating the efforts designed to consolidate joint Arab action.

They also discussed relations between both fraternal countries and ways to promote them.

Arab League Chief 'Abd-al-Majid Visits

Arrives, Makes Statements

JN2602204495 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid arrived in Amman a short while ago on a visit to Jordan. During the visit he will

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hold talks with senior Jordanian officials that will focus on current Arab issues, means to restore Arab solidarity, and the Arab League's role in bringing the viewpoints and stands of Arab brothers closer. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid was received by Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti.

Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid made the following statement to our political affairs correspondent Salim 'Ali Dhiyab:

[Begin recording] ['Abd-al-Majid] First of all, I am pleased with this visit, which comes at the invitation of my brother and friend Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti to visit Jordan. I think that the timing is appropriate and that the current circumstances have helped us to meet and discuss issues of importance inside the Arab world and developments in the Arab and international arenas.

Of course, we will discuss the overall Arab situation and the obstacles facing the peace march. We will also discuss our expectations in light of developments in the region and our eagerness to push the peace process forward and to achieve stability and tranquility in the region. I will also talk about the Arab League's role in this regard and what it could offer in terms of aid, considering the fact that it is the house of Arabs and the place where we meet and hold dialogue. We may have some differences in views, but there is no harm in this. However, it is in our interest to meet, to hold talks, and to prepare a program for the next session, which will be held at the Arab League headquarters on 22 March, God willing. I will discuss all these issues with the Jordanian leadership.

[Dhiyab] Mr. Secretary, how far have you gotten in terms of bringing Arab viewpoints closer together on the issue of Arab solidarity?

['Abd-al-Majid] As you know, we have called for Arab reconciliation. We also called for openness before reconciliation. I believe that this particular issue is important to every Arab and that reconciliation is inevitable. [end recording]

Comments on Amman Meetings

JN2702160995 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Italicized passages are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir received at the Prime Ministry today Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid. Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and Ibrahim 'Izz al-Din, minister of state for cabinet affairs, attended.

The conferees discussed developments in the regional peace process, current Arab conditions, and the role the Arab League can play in the forthcoming phase. They also discussed the means to strengthen joint Arab action and reactivate Arab solidarity to achieve the Arab nation's aspirations.

Following the meeting, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid spoke to our correspondent Khalil al-Qaryuti. He said:

['Abd-al-Majid] *I was very happy for this meeting. The conversation revolved around various issues of concern to Arab public opinion. I believe the timing of the visit to Jordan was appropriate because the visit comes before the meetings of the Economic and Social Council, which will be attended by Arab ministers of economy and finance, and the Arab League Council, which will be attended by the foreign ministers on 22 March, God willing, on the 50th anniversary of the Arab League.*

[Al-Qaryuti] *Mr. Secretary General, in light of your talks with the foreign minister, who is the current chairman of the Arab League Council, how do you view coordination between the Arab League Secretariat and the Jordanian Government to ensure the success of the forthcoming session?*

['Abd-al-Majid] *This, in fact, was one of the main points raised in my talks with the foreign minister and his excellency the prime minister. We agreed to discuss this issue in the foreign ministers' meeting. This is why I said the timing of the visit was appropriate because we discussed the agenda and its important items, as well as all the developments in the Arab arena, be it the peace process, cooperation among the Arab states, the future role of the Arab League, and everything that may strengthen joint Arab action and close Arab ranks and unite positions.*

Asked about the Arab League's position on recent Israeli measures in southern Lebanon and the blockade it threw on the southern Lebanese ports, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said:

['Abd-al-Majid] *We, of course, denounce this siege very strongly and consider it a provocative act that will lead to further tension in the region. Such developments do not help create a suitable atmosphere for the peace process, which is facing several difficulties we all know about. But what I wish to say is that the Arab parties are keen to boost the peace process because we need peace as much as Israel needs it. After my recent tour in Syria and Lebanon, I am now certain that peace is a strategic option for the leadership in Syria and Lebanon. Acts such as those which are carried out in southern Lebanon do not help achieve this peace.*

Asked about the role the Arab League is playing at the current stage and if it is able to achieve Arab solidarity, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd- al-Majid said:

['Abd-al-Majid] *As an Arab citizen, and not only because I am the Arab League secretary general, I believe that the Arab Leagues has a role to fulfill and a responsibility to shoulder. The Arab League represents the Arab people from the Gulf to the ocean. If there is criticism or an attack against the Arab League, I believe this criticism is made out of concern for the Arab League and does not aim to harm it. This is what I see. We have all the*

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requirements needed to meet together and agree further instead of having differences.

Foreign Minister Comments on Talks

JN2702163495 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti, current chairman of the Arab League Council, met today at the Foreign Ministry with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid. They discussed the topics on the agenda of the Arab foreign ministers' meeting scheduled for 22 March. They also discussed the latest developments in the Arab arena, particularly those concerning inter-Arab relations and the serious efforts exerted to rebuild inter-Arab confidence. Al-Kabariti added:

[Begin al-Kabariti recording] The topics on the agenda of the forthcoming session on 22 March include many important issues that will be discussed this time in a serious way, especially as regards the proposal on the Arab court of justice. This subject has been in the League's Charter for 50 years now and has never been discussed in a serious way. This time, the Arab foreign ministers will be presented with basic legislation and I believe there is now some sort of agreement on this issue. One or two countries may have certain reservations on the basic legislation, but it is clear that the majority supports the basic law of the Arab court of justice. This law also includes a mechanism to settle disputes and I think this will be a very positive step.

The second issue is amending the Charter. Also this time there is an agreement on the need to amend the Charter so that decisions are passed by majority.

These are the two basic issues which I think will be raised. There are also some other issues, such as a proposal not to sign the extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty if Israel refuses to sign. There are two working papers on this issue, one submitted by Egypt and another by Jordan.

The final point is a Sudanese proposal to include on the agenda an item concerning lifting the embargo imposed on Iraq. Current consultations are underway now by most of the Arab states to agree on including this item on the agenda. The meeting should come out with a decision on this issue. This item should not turn into a point of dispute to prevent the meeting from achieving any progress in the direction of ending the suffering of the Iraqi people. [end recording]

Asked about the agreement reached by Saudi Arabia and Yemen to settle their border dispute, Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti said:

[Begin al-Kabariti recording] In fact, this agreement was very warmly welcomed by Jordanian quarters. We believe that any solution to border disputes should always be achieved within the Arab house and through the same method which Saudi Arabia and Yemen followed to resolve this dispute through the memorandum of understanding. We hope this will provide a step in the right direction to resolve this problem once and for all, because we feel that this problem was indeed a point of tension and was potentially dangerous in a region we always hope will be dominated by the spirit of brotherhood. We welcome and support this agreement. We also hope that the dialogue will continue on the basis of the memorandum of understanding to arrive at a final solution to this problem. [end recording]

Meets With King Husayn

JN2702185395 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn received Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid at the Royal Hashemite Court this afternoon.

His majesty emphasized the constants of the Jordanian position on the peace process and its sincere and relentless effort to realize comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in this region. He said Jordan will continue to support the peace process on the other tracks, and will make all possible efforts so that the process will realize its objectives: namely, establishing the bases of comprehensive and just peace in which the peoples of this region will be able to overcome the results of the conflict from which they have suffered for several decades, and to resume the march of development and construction, and to prepare for the future in which the next generations enjoy stability and an honorable and secure life.

For his part, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid expressed his appreciation of the His Majesty King Husayn's efforts and his continuous attempts to unify the nation's positions and heal the rifts among brothers through objective and constructive dialogue in a manner that is beneficial to all sons of the nation, enabling it to overcome the challenges and problems it is facing. He emphasized the need for activating the Arab League's role and modernizing its system in order to be able to carry out its missions in the face of the new challenges the nation is facing at this stage. He recalled his majesty's call for working within this context several years ago.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid emphasized the importance of Jordan's role and efforts in realizing comprehensive and just peace in this region.

The meeting was attended by Marwan al-Qasim, Royal Hashemite Court chief; 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, foreign minister; and Ahmad 'Adil, Arab League assistant secretary general.

His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir met with 'Abd-al-Majid and his delegation at his office in the Prime Ministry this morning. Ibrahim 'Izz al-Din, minister of state for cabinet affairs, and al-Kabariti attended.

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The meeting dealt with developments in the region in general, especially developments in the peace process, the current Arab situation, and the role the Arab League can play in the forthcoming phase. The talks also tackled means to strengthen joint Arab action and reactivate Arab solidarity to achieve the Arab nation's aspirations and ensure the future of its generations.

The prime minister emphasized Jordan's support for the Arab League and its organs and establishments, and for its important and central role in the service of Arab causes and to strengthen the solidarity and unity of Arab ranks through making more efforts within the framework of institutionalized actions and contacts that serve this objective.

He also emphasized that Jordan, in its capacity as the president of the current session of the Arab League Council, is doing all it can to render the activities of the league successful and tackle the issues and topics on agenda of the session, especially those which deal with the crucial issues the nation is facing.

He reviewed the efforts of Jordan, under its wise Hashemite leadership, toward realizing peace and stability in the region and supporting the peace process in order to reach lasting and comprehensive peace that is beneficial for all peoples of the region.

For his part, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said in statements to journalists following the meeting that his visit to Jordan has come at the appropriate time because it precedes the meetings of the Economic and Social Council for Arab finance and economy ministers. [passage omitted]

On the Saudi-Yemeni memorandum of understanding on the border problem, he said: We welcome the agreement between the two countries. He expressed hope that all Arab differences will be contained before they are aggravated, and that horizons will open for more cooperation and brotherhood among the Arab countries.

On the efforts to convene an Arab summit conference, the Arab League secretary general said there are no moves toward this objective, adding that this subject concerns the Arab leaders. [passage omitted]

Meets With Crown Prince

JN2702193695 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan received Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid at his office in the Royal Hashemite Court today. Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti attended.

His Highness Prince Hasan Spoke about Arab coordination and the gaps obstructing this coordination and the need to bridge these gaps.

His highness defined three elements for the realization of Arab reconciliation in the present situation. He said frank talks should be employed in order to diagnose current problems, then intransigence in positions should be contained, and later the idea of Arab reconciliation will be reached.

His highness also spoke about the regional security plan, and called for the formation of an Arab center to scrutinize the nonuse and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

Concludes Visit, Departs

JN2802120195 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Arab League Secretary General, left Amman today winding up a three-day visit to Jordan, during which he met with His Majesty King Husayn and His Highness Crown Prince Hasan.

He also held talks with Prime Minister His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, and senior officials. Talks broached Arab and regional issues, joint Arab action, peace process developments, and activating the Arab League's role.

He was seen off by Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti.

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Buwayz on Peace, Security Committee With U.S.

NC2802082395 Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic 19 Feb 95 pp 3, 15

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [AL-ANWAR] Despite Europe's limited role in the Middle East, the European troika delegation raised two issues with Syrian President Hafiz al- Asad and with the Israeli Government: The first urges Israel to implement Security Council Resolution 425 and the second calls for the withdrawal of foreign forces, including Syrian forces, from Lebanon. President al-Asad responded, saying that the Lebanese authorities did not ask the Syrians to withdraw and that they are always ready to withdraw. How would you assess the European proposal?

[Buwayz] We appreciate Europe's commitment to Resolution 425, which Europe has repeatedly and unequivocally expressed. But we demand that European countries not be content with mentioning and calling for the implementation of this resolution. What is required is that these countries impose it on the Security Council in the resolution it passes. Regarding the Syrian forces in Lebanon, I believe that linking their presence with that of the Israeli forces is unfair to both Lebanon and Syria. Lebanon does not want the issues to be proposed in this way. The presence of the Syrian forces in Lebanon has to do with Lebanese-Syrian relations. When the Lebanese Government sees that there is no need for these forces, at the appropriate time and in the appropriate circumstances, it will discuss this issue with Syria. But linking the two issues is futile and does not serve Lebanon's efforts to regain its full sovereignty.

[AL-ANWAR] On a purely Lebanese level, have you sensed that the European group can assume a role that is independent of Washington and that is supportive of Lebanon, even if differences might arise with Washington? Or does the European group not have this capability, instead remaining content to play a role supportive of U.S. policy?

[Buwayz] We view the European initiative first as a beginning and second as one that does not contradict the U.S. proposal, since this proposal was expressed at the Madrid conference and through written U.S. messages. This proposal is based on implementing Resolution 425 regarding Lebanon and Resolutions 242 and 338 regarding the situation in the region as a whole. Since this is the declared and official U.S. stance, we absolutely cannot understand why any European initiative can be explained in a way that contradicts or counters U.S. policy. When the United States amends its policy on the region, we will consider this issue and express our views. [passage omitted]

[AL-ANWAR] Lebanon conducted a security dialogue with the United States to facilitate the adoption of a U.S. decision to lift the ban on U.S. citizens travelling there. The dialogue ended without setting a date for its resumption. Is the Lebanese Government setting out a new date for resuming the security dialogue?

[Buwayz] Though this security committee issue has been the subject of numerous articles and conflicting analysis, I say very simply that the dialogue was necessary for Lebanon to assert the sincerity of Lebanese intentions and the positive nature of the Lebanese stance in light of the U.S. decision to reassess some of the decisions it made during the war in Lebanon and because we already agreed beforehand to confine these issues to the security of U.S. citizens without touching on issues that we believe are principally and directly linked with the peace process.

Based on this situation and in response to the demands of Lebanese-American figures who played a role inside the United States to reopen this file—after we, the Foreign Ministry or Lebanese Government, stopped raising it—we could not ignore any positive moves on this issue. It is on this basis that the delegation went to Washington and fulfilled its duties. The delegation was provided with all the necessary information to carry out its mission, a mission for which the delegation was completely prepared. I believe the delegation succeeded in its mission. The ball is now in the U.S. court. If the U.S. Administration's intentions are ready and prepared, then I believe that these principles and the explanations given by the Lebanese ambassador and delegation constitute a base, they even make up a complete file, for reviewing earlier decisions, though the issue might require some details or examination. We might then study the feasibility of resuming the dialogue. But if U.S. intentions are not ready to follow a major political turning point in Lebanese-U.S. relations, then it is our view that the ball will remain in the U.S. court.

[AL-ANWAR] But some people are raising the following question: How do you in Lebanon reconcile between providing security for U.S. citizens and what is regarded in Washington as the presence of extremist forces hostile to U.S. interests?

[Buwayz] The presence of extremist forces exercising extremist political options is one thing and the presence of forces that could attack U.S. citizens is something else. No country can force another one to change its people's views. I do not believe that a country calling itself democratic, such as the United States, can ask anyone else to change their convictions. The big difference is that the United States has the right to ascertain that there are security guarantees for its citizens. This is a different issue, because we in Lebanon differentiate between political freedom and political action on the one hand and actions that disturb security, and that constitute assaults on others, on the other hand.

[AL-ANWAR] The Americans believe that the Lebanese security service does not take seriously the security agencies' information on incidents before they occur, insinuating that it lets crimes happen.

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[Buwayz] I think not. The United States knows that no state can guarantee that attacks will not happen. But the United States is right to ask about the ability of the security agencies to uncover an attack when it happens and to show seriousness in referring the incident to the competent judicial authorities. It is right to question the ability of these authorities to bring the culprits to trial and ask what punishment the assailant will get.

There is a big difference between this and asking a state to provide a guarantee in advance in every case. This is impossible anywhere. France can give no absolute guarantee to anyone. Britain cannot and neither can Sweden nor Norway. Even the states that have sophisticated and advanced security agencies and serious judicial authorities cannot guarantee that an attack that might occur will have a good chance of being uncovered, prosecuted, and its perpetrators sentenced. I think the U.S. Administration understands this logic. I think it knows its global interests might be subjected to assault at any moment. More important is for the United States to rest assured that there is a price to be paid by someone who attacks someone else in violation of the law.

[AL-ANWAR] From your position, do you feel that political parties in Lebanon enjoy some degree of harmony with the government on the issue of security guarantees for U.S. subjects?

[Buwayz] I believe that since the war ended in Lebanon several years ago, there has been a conviction, or rather a political decision by the various parties, regarding renouncing the use of violence and weapons, except when it comes to the legitimate right to resist the occupier. Events in the past three or four years have shown that this practice is applied.

[AL-ANWAR] Let us return to the central issue—the negotiations. We have noticed that for some time the Lebanese-Israeli track has been out of the picture. We also noticed that the negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track are also frozen. Why?

[Buwayz] The entire peace process is in a stalemate, whatever the track. I think that this is also true regarding the Lebanese and Syrian files. The reason for this stalemate lies primarily, solely, in the Rabin government's hesitation on every level. Indeed, Rabin is vacillating between proposing a peace plan to his people before the Knesset elections and refraining from proposing it. Proposing such a plan might naturally entail concessions and he fears that these concessions may not help him in the elections. He also realizes that any failure to propose a peace plan to his people—on the threshold of elections—may be used against him. It might be said that he does not believe in his plan, particularly since he realizes that he is not a champion of rejection, extremism, or war; the Likud Bloc is the champion in this area. Hence his hesitation between these two courses. Another point that may explain his dithering is that at any given time he believes he must propose a peace process under the current U.S. Administration, because it is lenient with him and fulfills all his demands, and at other times, he considers that commitment or agreement under this Administration, particularly after the victory of the Republicans in Congress, does not guarantee a long-term commitment regarding the financial and technological and other gains. So he remains hesitant between the two options. Rabin is hesitating over settling other issues decisively in view of the situation in Gaza and Jericho. Sometimes he believes that saving the Gaza and Jericho Agreement requires progress in the peace process to finish with this stage. At other times he believes he will encounter difficulties in proposing any peace plan in view of the situation in Gaza and Jericho. I believe the stalemate is closely linked with the Rabin government's hesitation; that government has not yet made up its mind regarding a political decision concerning peace.

When Rabin complains that he does not enjoy the support of the majority or sufficient popular cover in Israel to make such decisions, he must realize that he is responsible for this hesitation, helping it to spread among his people. A leader who shows hesitation should not later ask why the people lost confidence in him. I believe that had Rabin not resorted to this tactical Machiavellian method in the negotiations—even though he may have vision and realizes that peace requires a historic man who can make a big decision—he would have completed the peace process and perhaps obtained his people's confidence by making it clear that such an option is in the interest of all the parties in the region.

Buwayz Explains Contacts To Lift Israeli Blockade

NC2702130495 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has said that the Israeli blockade against the Lebanese coast is aimed at pressuring the Lebanese state into throwing the card of resistance. But we consider resistance a legitimate activity as long as the Israeli occupation of our land continues, he said. At a news conference he held in the Bustrus Palace [the Foreign Ministry headquarters] this afternoon, Buwayz said that he held contacts with the ambassadors of the UN Security Council's permanent member states, and that he will continue the contacts with the other Security Council members and with Arab and European ambassadors.

He said letters were also sent to the UN secretary general, the Security Council president, and the Arab League secretary general to familiarize them with the situation. He said he will meet the foreign ministers of the European Union in Brussels and discuss with them the details of the Israeli aggressions.

Asked about Lebanon's demands, Buwayz said: We want the intervention of the Security Council, the Arab League, and the influential states to lift the blockade because the aggressions are unjustified. He said that there has been no confirmation so far about a visit to the

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Middle East by any American envoy. He expressed his belief that the peace process, which has recently witnessed a deadlock, must get moving before it is too late.

Security in South, Response to Blockade Moves Updated

NC2802065495 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli naval blockade of Lebanon's southern coastal water continues. Reports from the south this morning indicate that the Israeli forces directed intermittent gunfire at several villages in Iqlim al-Tuffah and al-Nabatiyah early today. Other areas, including the southern suburb of Tulin and the old quarter of al-Qantarah, also came under Israeli 155 and 175-mm artillery fire. Ten houses were damaged in the village. Resistance men retaliated and bombarded the enemy positions in al- Qantarah with 82-mm mortar rounds, scoring direct hits.

According to the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Ba'labakk, Israeli warplanes carried out extensive sorties and mock raids over the town last night.

Lebanon intends to resort to the UN Security Council despite the ongoing exchanges on the international level. Lebanon continues to reject Israel's proposals for lifting the naval blockade.

Washington Said Siding With Israel on Blockade

NC2802075395 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Signals indicate a U.S. stance in support of the Israeli conditions to lift the naval blockade. This increases the likelihood of this topic appearing on the agenda of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's forthcoming mission in the region.

Press reports say that Lebanese Ambassador in Washington Riyad Tabbarah has reported to responsible quarters in Beirut on the outcome of a meeting he held in Washington with Tony [name indistinct], deputy assistant secretary of state for Middle East affairs, as well as on his contacts with other U.S. officials in a bid to lift the blockade. Tabbarah explained to the U.S. officials the nature of the security measures adopted by the Lebanese Army at the southern crossing points leading to the occupied border zone. He told them the Lebanese state has the right to set up checkpoints anywhere it wants on its territory, while the Israeli measures violate Lebanon's sovereignty and adversely affect the Lebanese people's daily life in various areas. The U.S. reply was that Israel calls things by their real names and that the United States considers Hizballah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to be terrorist organizations, while Lebanon treats them as Resistance groups. The Americans sided with Israel on this point.

AL-SAFIR Says CIA Ring Uncovered in Beirut

NC2702134595 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 22 Feb 95 pp 1, 8

[FBIS Translated Text] There is a consensus among Beirut officials to stay alert to possible military operations by Israel while reports have continued about the mobilization of enemy armored vehicles in the border strip.

While the Israeli forces continued their bombardment of the whole front opposite the occupied southern area, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz disclosed that the enemy had sent a new warning message to the Lebanese Government.

According to reports, the message, which was carried by citizens residing in the occupied border strip and delivered to a Lebanese army post, stated that Israel was determined to maintain its naval siege of Tyre until the Lebanese army eased or completely canceled its measures on the crossing points leading to the occupied border strip.

Two weeks ago AL-SAFIR was the only newspaper to publish a report about an Israeli ultimatum carried to the Lebanese army by a Lebanese citizen.

It should be noted that two months ago the Lebanese army adopted strict security measures on the crossing points separating the border strip from the liberated areas. This foiled an Israeli plot to send booby-trapped cars to Beirut.

In December 1994 one such booby-trapped car exploded in Beirut's Sfayr District, killing two citizens one of whom was a former Islamic Resistance official.

In the same context, reliable security sources told AL-SAFIR that concerned agencies had arrested several spy rings that had been planted in Beirut's Southern Suburb and instructed to watch and carry out operations against Hizballah offices.

The sources told AL-SAFIR that some time ago, the person in charge of one such ring was arrested. It turned out that he had been instructed by the CIA to mount a surveillance operation on Hizballah centers and the movements of its officials.

The sources added that the Israeli intelligence apparatus, Mosad, planted several moles in the liberated areas, exploiting the then lax army measures on the crossing points with the occupied border strip. The army's measures were originally lax to avoid adding to the citizens' hardships.

The sources pointed out that when the Israeli forces' scheme failed and its mole cells inside Lebanon were uncovered and after resistance operations ruined the morale of the militia collaborating with Israel, the latter escalated the military situation and laid siege to fishermen operating out of the Tyre Port and the citizens

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living inside the border strip. Israel's aim was to provoke divisions among the citizens, the resistance forces, and the authorities.

Yesterday, during his meeting with the editors' association delegation Chamber speaker Nabih Birri stressed that Israel wants to reduce the [Lebanese] army's measures at the crossing points so that it would be able to send more booby-trapped cars to the liberated areas.

Birri expressed surprise at the U.S. decision to decrease U.S. aid to UN forces in the Middle East, noting that this decision coincided with the Israeli escalation in the south.

Birri's position on Washington's decision coincided with the position adopted by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz who said that Washington will not likely interfere to stop the Israeli buildup in the south. In his address to the Chamber's Foreign Relations Committee yesterday, the foreign minister said that after every Israeli attack we used to seek Washington's interference. But from now on we must rely on ourselves. Buwayz added: I am afraid that the U.S. side will not interfere, and I am also afraid that the voting will not be in our favor if we lodge a complaint to the UN Security Council. Buwayz noted that the Lebanese Foreign Ministry is establishing contacts with a number of countries in connection with the situation in the south.

On the security level, the Israeli forces resumed their attacks on southern Lebanon yesterday. The Israeli forces bombarded many villages and Israeli aircraft carried out mock raids on several areas.

Hizballah Figures View U.S. Report on Human Rights

NC2502132795

[FBIS Editorial Report] Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic, a mouthpiece of Hizballah, carries in its 10 February issue some comments and reactions to the U.S. State Department report on human rights as it relates to Lebanon.

In a 2,000-word unattributed report on page 3 on a meeting by the Bloc of Loyalty to Resistance, a parliamentary group affiliated with Hizballah, the bloc is cited as saying: "Those who a few days ago published their report on human rights issues, especially in Lebanon—and we mean the U.S. State Department—have never been fair or just throughout their political history. Indeed, they have always been fully biased toward the forces of evil, domination, and hegemony in the world."

The report cites the bloc as saying that the U.S. report "shows the amount of American plotting against the future of Lebanon and the region, and the intensive attempts by the flagrantly-biased State Department to humiliate our people and conquer their will."

The bloc is further cited as saying that the U.S. report's "many allegations and slanders provide the strongest proof and testimony of America's hatred and rancor against this country and its people." Members of the Hizballah parliamentarian bloc, according to the newspaper report, contend that the U.S. report on human rights "is part of the continued pressure on Lebanon and its people, pressure that seeks to drive them to offer everything desired by Clinton's administration and his fabricated Zionist entity to serve this evil entity and to undermine the integral link between Lebanon and Syria."

A 2,500-word article by 'Ali Mahmud on page 10 says the U.S. report on human rights seeks to highlight the shortcomings of the countries that are not loyal to the United States. Consequently, the writer says, the report is "a psychological instrument seeking to impose political, and even intellectual, trusteeship on those countries."

Mahmud claims that the report makes only brief mention of Israel's human rights violations in south Lebanon, and "without presenting them in a context that serves the cause of the Lebanese people" and their "resistance" to the occupation. He says: "Although the report stresses that Israel is detaining a number of Lebanese citizens, including Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd and Mustafa al-Dirani, both linked to the Islamic Resistance, it does not consider these detentions a violation of international law and fails to make any comment on them. In effect it gives them a certain amount of justification."

Noting that the report accuses Hizballah of "violating international standards regarding the treatment of prisoners," 'Ali Mahmud says that "Hizballah does not have its own prisons." He says that the American report persists in "fabricating facts" when it claims that "the Islamic militias (Hizballah) have their own judicial system, and they said in February 1994 that they would apply Islamic shari'ah in the areas under their control." The writer asks: "Who said that, and when?"

The writer says the U.S. report, which refers to Hizballah attacks against the South Lebanese Army and Israeli targets, fails to note that these attacks are linked to the overt Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory. Citing the report's reference to "two prominent Israeli crimes" last year, a raid on a residential building and a siege on the town of Yahmur, Mahmud comments: "But the report fails to view these two incidents as part of a constant policy of aggression."

'Ali Mahmud says Washington wants to impose its own standards on other nations "at a time when the United States itself is plagued by unparalleled social chaos, showing it is itself in need of lessons on how to respect human rights, protect people from crime, and provide them with social and medical guarantees."

Mahmud concludes by urging the Lebanese Government to take a firmer position so as "not to allow the U.S. Administration to interfere in Lebanese affairs and to

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commend the resistance in the south, which is the true embodiment of man's right to life and self-determination."

In A 1,800-word article on page 11 Najib Nur-al-Din also claims that the United States is judging nations by its own standards and policies, and is threatening "everyone who disagrees with its judgment and objects to its interference." The writer says the U.S. report on human rights "shows noticeable sympathy" for the dissolved Lebanese Forces under Samir Ja'ja'. It seems from the report, the writer says, that "the United States is treating all armed Lebanese forces from the same position, agents and resistance men alike." He says this is an attempt to remove the label of legitimacy from the resistance, which is a right of every nation under occupation.

Nur-al-Din adds: "In the report, the United States blames the Lebanese Government for its leniency regarding the activity of Hizballah and the resistance, considering this a major lapse and a clear Lebanese violation of human rights. This is an explicit condemnation of the Lebanese Government for its failure to take deterrent measures against the forces that resist the continuing Zionist attacks on Lebanon."

The author says the U.S. report is "a flagrant violation of Lebanon's internal affairs." He also attacks the report for viewing Syrian-Lebanese cooperation, which he says is based on an official Lebanese request, as Syrian interference in Lebanon's affairs. Noting that the report coincides with the meetings of the Lebanese- U.S. Security Committee, the author says that the report "will have a largely negative impact on the Lebanese position in these meetings because it constitutes clear pressure on Lebanon."

Concluding, Nur-al-Din calls on the government "to take a decisive and serious position to defend the resistance as an honorable Lebanese party honestly reflecting the will of all the Lebanese."

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Al-Asad Addresses Scholars, Religious Men

JN2802082495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad held an iftar banquet at the al-Dimashqiyah Hall yesterday evening in honor of scholars and men of religion. The banquet was attended by Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Wahib Fadil; Awqaf Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid Tarabulsi; Zuhayr Ghazal, secretary of the presidency; Shaykh Ahmad Kiftaru, the republic's grand mufti; and scholars and men of religion from various Syrian governorates.

Following the call for sunset prayer, the president and his guests performed the evening prayer. His excellency and the invitees then moved to the iftar banquet. A number of scholars delivered speeches. Shaykh Kiftaru spoke about the current situation of the Arab and Islamic nation and the fierce campaign being launched against Islam. He also spoke about the wrong practices in the name of Islam by persons ignorant of true Islam or by the enemies of Islam. [passage omitted]

Dr. Tarabulsi delivered a speech in which he thanked the president on behalf of the ulema for his kind gesture of inviting the ulema to the banquet. [passage omitted] He concluded his speech by asking the president to address the ulema.

His excellency the president delivered a lengthy speech in which he reviewed world and regional developments, the peace process, and Syria's stands toward the developments of the peace process and Arab affairs. He expressed his pleasure at meeting with the ulema in the blessed month of Ramadan, in which God revealed the holy Koran to Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him. The president expressed his delight that the ulema speeches expressed feelings identical to his own on important issues related to Islam and politics. The president spoke about the past divisions and said: Many have committed the mistake of division and should have known that personal opinion that leads to the division of Muslims is against religion and does not please God. Any personal opinion that leads to the unity of Muslims pleases almighty God and Muslims.

His excellency the president added: There is only one God, one Koran, and a single prophet, and Islam binds all to one another. Why then do we have this division? Personal opinions remain correct as long as they are not opposed to Muslim unity and as long as they do not lead to estrangement among Muslims. They will then please God. Personal opinions that are opposed to what is revealed in the holy Koran or sound traditions of the prophet are false and must be deemed unacceptable regardless of their authors.

His excellency the president went on to say: We are building our country well. We must continue our work in all fields and increase our efforts to enlighten all the communities, big or small, into which we come into contact. Our movement forward has been extensive. In the course of this movement, we have drawn strength from our belief in our faith, our homeland, and our ability to face up to the enemies of religion, the homeland, and right, and to the many problems entailed. We are satisfied with what we have accomplished thus far. Nonetheless, many things need to be accomplished. If we view the recent past, we feel and are reassured that we are progressing. However, we should not feel that we have obtained perfection. Any single individual or people who feel that they have achieved perfection begin the slide toward collapse. We must underscore the need to cement the links that bind us together in our homeland. Thus, we will be able to safeguard our homeland and patriotism.

The president added: When they sense danger, people unite regardless of the difficulties. People do not surrender even if their enemies colonize them directly. In self-defense, people fight with every means available to them; they fight with their flesh and blood, with stones and knives. They do not submit to their enemies. Nobody accepts humiliation and renounces his heritage, history, and values. You and the citizens have listened to my talks and statements. Nobody has heard, nobody will ever hear that I have reneged on a principle, conceded a right, or abandoned one of our national and pan-Arab stands. This is known to those who deal with us in view of their responsibilities and to those with whom we deal. They have never found us to be silent toward any wrong or toward an intention or statement by which they meant to harm our people and nation.

The president added: I gain strength through the people and through the truth. I always say this to those who ask what reassures me in this age that is witnessing Arab and world collapses the kind of which mankind has never heard or read about. We in Syria are neither big in area nor large in population. We may not possess the wealth that others have, be they foreigners and Arabs, but we possess faith in God and the homeland. Those who believe in God, the homeland, and the people, like me, must triumph because they are in the right. I am strong through the people. I trust the people, believing that they support me because I am guided by their feelings, will, interests, and dignity. He who trusts the people and sides with them will be reassured about the future.

The president said: We take everything into consideration. Syria is not guided by anybody where fateful matters are concerned. Nobody in the world can drag Syria into doing what it does not want to do. Political work should not lead to the selling out of rights and dignity. Separate actions by some Arab brothers do not affect Syria's position. We will never agree to any solution that does not meet our needs or preserve our dignity. In the past, discussions centered on states fighting for influence in and over Syria. Others struggled to control Syria. Today, the situation is completely different. Syria today is different from yesterday. We have made great progress.

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Talking about those Arabs who acted separately, the president said: We always defended our Arab brothers who acted separately before they embarked on their action. We will continue defend them when they defend themselves. We do not want to enter into struggles with those who acted separately because the enemy wants us to fight among ourselves. When we carry out such a fight there will be a disaster and our conditions will become worse. We ask our Arab brothers to sense the danger and cooperate to defend ourselves, our homeland, and dignity.

His excellency asserted that Syria and Egypt have always been pillars of the Arab nation and whenever they joined hands they realized much for their Arab and Islamic nations.

Speaking of the new world order, the president said: This order has not yet crystallized and taken its final form. This requires us to be alert. Great people in the world are alert. They do not feel total reassurance about this order. This new world that they speak of will survive if it is a fair world in which states deal in freedom, equality, and democracy and if relations among these states are relations of equality and democracy, because absence of equality and democracy creates an atmosphere of war, fighting, and disaster. It is wrong to believe that disasters will befall only smaller nations. Equality and democracy will allow us to live in understanding and cooperation to promote world civilization and realize peace to reach a world in which wars, poverty, and sickness will disappear.

Visiting Iranian Official Meets Leaders

Confers With Khaddam

JN2502193795 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Mohammad Kazem Khansari, director of the Middle East Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry. The Iranian ambassador in Damascus attended. Talks centered on the situation in the region, as well as bilateral relations.

Received by Foreign Minister

JN2602164395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' today received Mohammad Kazem Khansari, director of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry. The meeting was attended by Walid Rajab, head of the Foreign Ministry's Asia Desk, and Iranian Ambassador in Damascus Hasan Akhtari.

Conversations during the meeting revolved around the situation in the region, issues of mutual concern, and ties between the two friendly countries.

Proposed Regional Center Said Attempt To Involve Israel

JN2702204595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In statements to journalists today, Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti said that Jordan has submitted a proposal to the next Arab League Council meeting on the proliferation of nuclear weapons for the establishment of what he called a regional center for cooperation and security in the region.

Observers viewed this proposal as implicitly meaning the possibility of including Israel in this proposed center. The proposal was also viewed as a clear attempt to introduce Israel through a regional formula into important and sensitive sites in the Arab region, at a time when Israel reiterates its refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and maintains a large arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin called on European nations, including Germany, to extend aid to Jordan to build dams on the Jordan and al—Yarmuk Rivers. This call was made during Rabin's meeting today with Joachim Bieterlich, German chancellor's special aid for foreign relations affairs and security, currently visiting Israel.

It is worth noting that Jordan and Israel signed an agreement to build joint dams on the Jordan River.

For his part, Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres discussed with the German official European aid to the Palestinian limited self-rule authority and Jordan to support the agreements Israel has signed with them.

Israeli Logic Said Like 'Old Nazis' Logic

JN2602103795 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0830 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 26 Feb (SANA)—The newspaper AL-BA'TH, published here today, has said that one should not be overpessimistic, as Warren Christopher announced in Washington prior to his tour of the region, and that the U.S. secretary may be in possession of certain facts that urge him to make this trip, which could be the most important trip.

In an editorial today, AL-BA'TH analyzes the Syrian and Israeli positions on the peace process and says the differences between the two sides are still profound. These differences are known to everybody. One of the two parties declared its clear and open commitment to the peace initiative while the other party did not show the minimum commitment to the principles on which the peace process was based.

The newspaper emphasizes that Christopher is aware of these facts. Therefore, he might find difficulties obstructing his mission in and not outside Israel.

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Concluding its editorial, the newspaper says that although Christopher voiced little optimism before his tour, he is fully aware of the intransigence and conditions awaiting him—intransigence and conditions that were rejected by Syria based on the firm position of either having just and comprehensive peace or nothing at all.

Commenting on Christopher's expected tour of the region, AL-THAWRAH newspaper raises questions about the results he will realize in breaking the stalemate in the peace process caused by the Israel's intransigence and rejection of the bases of peace.

Answering the questions it raises on how successful the United States will be in forcing Israel to abide by the principles of peace and the resolutions of international legitimacy, the newspaper says all answers begin with defining responsibility for the obstruction. The United States knows before any other side the party that is responsible for the obstruction and stalemate in the negotiations.

The paper wonders: Will Christopher be bringing anything new that would cut Israel to size and confirm the credibility of the United States as an honest and influential partner in the peace process?

The paper concludes by saying that the success of the U.S. efforts to activate the peace process depends on the U.S. ability to make Israel accept the prerequisites of peace and respond favorably to the demands of international legitimacy.

In its editorial, TISHRIN emphasizes that the Israeli logic that justifies launching aggressions against the Arabs in southern Lebanon and occupied Palestine is similar to the fascist logic in Europe that considers any one who carries out resistance for the liberation of his country a terrorist.

The newspaper says that peace, according to the Israeli point of view, means Judaizing the Arab territories, constructing settlements on these territories, and evacuating their inhabitants and confiscating their properties, shelling residential areas, and killing innocent people.

If any Arab protests against this behavior that conflicts with the simplest principles of international law and raises weapons in defense of his land and homeland, he is called a terrorist who is hostile to peace and who deserves to be violently repressed.

The newspaper says this Israeli logic, which is unique in the world, is the logic of the old Nazis who invaded Europe and Russia.

Concluding its editorial, the newspaper warns that the Middle East peace process is in serious danger as a result of the aggressive Israeli practices, and urges all real peace lovers to deter Israel, because there will be no peace in the region without Israel's full withdrawal and compliance with UN resolutions.

TV Commentary Notes Israel's 'Organized Terrorism'

JN2702132895 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 26 Feb 95

["Behind the News" commentary by Yusuf Maqdisi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Good evening gentlemen: A few days ago Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and most of his cabinet members paid a visit to the occupied part of southern Lebanon. They made the visit not to extend an olive branch but rather to deliver a warning with a number of conditions. These conditions ran along the following lines: The Lebanese Government should halt its measures against Israel's security canton in southern Lebanon and put an end to Lebanese resistance inside this canton, or else Israel might think of resorting to new methods against Lebanon.

It is not difficult to predict what Israel will resort to, given that it invaded Lebanon twice, in 1978 and 1982, and has been staging acts of aggression and violations against Lebanese territories on an almost daily basis since its declaration following the June 1967 war that the 1967 armistice lines with Lebanon no longer exist. Rabin—who claims Israel has no territorial ambitions in Lebanon—failed to refer to Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanese territories. He also expressed his desire, while he was on occupied Lebanese soil, to see a Lebanese Government capable of meeting the security requirements of Israel and its canton—which started to collapse thanks to resistance and precautionary measures of the Lebanese Government to curb Israel's acts of subversion carried out through the occupied part of southern Lebanon.

Gentlemen, Israel has expanded its blockade of the southern coast of Lebanon thus providing further evidence of its practice of organized terrorism against Lebanon, which is a UN member. There are countless incidents of Israeli violations and acts of aggression against Lebanon. They may be unmatched in international relations, despite the repeated UN confirmations that the sovereignty of Lebanon and its right to restore its occupied lands should be respected.

What annoys Israel more than anything else is the fact that Lebanon overcame its domestic ordeal and its legitimate authority restored its role in building Lebanon and promoting its national and popular institutions. Every step Lebanon takes toward enhancing this course and boosting ties of fraternity, cooperation, and coordination with Syria and other Arab states prompts Israel to step up its pressure and acts of aggression. This is because day in and day out Israel is finding it impossible to revive the defunct 17 May agreement and force Lebanon to conclude a unilateral Oslo, Amman type agreement with it. What causes further apprehension for the Israeli Government is the collapse of its security strategy in occupied southern Lebanon, given its failure

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to halt resistance, prevent the collapse of the canton of its agent, [South Lebanese Army commander] Lahd, and force the Lebanese Government to deal with this canton as if it were a national entity—and as if asking the enemy for support and protection are not forms of national treason.

However, neither Rabin's threats nor the policy of force that seeds destruction can impose submission on the Lebanese people, whose political leadership and resistance are uniting to liberate the occupied part of southern Lebanon and enforce international legitimacy through the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425—a resolution which, if Israel were to adhere to its implementation, would lead to the end of resistance because occupation would be ended.

Gentlemen, Israel's sticking to its Lahd canton in the occupied part of southern Lebanon will not provide security for it no matter how much bloody terrorism it carries out against the Lebanese brothers. Israel would have been better off had it drawn lessons from the outcome of its first invasion of Lebanon in 1978, the establishment of the so-called "Good Fence", and from the consequences of its large-scale 1982 invasion of Lebanon—which led to the downfall of the 17 May agreement, less than one year after its signing, and to Israel's forced withdrawal from Lebanon to the so-called security zone in southern Lebanon. It should have also learned a lesson from the consequences of its blasting of border villages in southern Lebanon for a full week in 1993; Lebanon remained steadfast and resistance continued. We say: It would have been better for Israel to have learned lessons because its plans in Lebanon did not and will never be successful because it has brought destruction and fragmentation to Lebanon. These plans also seek to turn Lebanon into a group of cantons annexed to Israel, thus abolishing its cultural role and Arab belonging and turning it into a hotbed of aggression against its Arab family, especially against Syria, which spared no effort to preserve the unity of Lebanon's land, people, and establishments. Syria has also sought to boost Lebanon's national authority and legitimate resistance aiming to foil the Israeli aggressive plan in Lebanon.

Gentlemen, there is a big difference between the party that destroys, fragments, and tries to impose hegemony and the party that helps unite land and people, enhance security and stability, and cement the national, political position that safeguards dignity and restores rights.

We in Syria and Lebanon are one people in two states, whose relations are bolstered by the Brotherhood and Coordination Treaty, which embodies, in its essence, the unity of positions and action and common vision to confront looming challenges based on the inseparability of adherence to constants from a just and comprehensive peace that terminates occupation and aggression and realizes equal and balanced security on all the tracks of conflict. Israel's failure to acknowledge these facts inspires us to recall the statement by former U.S. President George Bush upon declaring his peace initiative in 1991 that geography does not achieve security. We would also bring to mind remarks made by Bill Clinton, the current U.S. President, who, while in Damascus, said that the security of any party should not be made at the expense of another party. So, will Rabin and other Israeli leaders learn lessons from these two statements.

Radio Assails Israeli Policy, Urges New U.S. Efforts

JN2702170595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1237 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: When Israel threatens, through its senior military officials, to expand its aggression against Lebanon in every direction, it is proving that nothing has changed in its old policy based on aggression, terrorism, and hostility to peace. Moreover, when Israel continues to shell the villages and towns of southern Lebanon, imposes an unfair naval blockade on the Lebanese coast, and interferes in the affairs of an independent and sovereign country, then any talk about peace coming from the leaders of Tel Aviv calls for derision and condemnation.

How can one believe Israel's claims about a desire to achieve peace while everyday Lebanon is being showered with missiles from land, sea, and air and while the Israeli naval blockade along its coast continues. How can one believe claims by the leaders of Tel Aviv that they are working for peace while they are insisting on aggression, are saber-rattling, and are stockpiling their arsenal with the most advanced conventional and nonconventional weapons.

How can any sensible person in the world believe Israel's claim that it wants to end the state of war in the region while it even refuses to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty? Moreover, what excuse can possibly justify the Israelis' continued armament and their refusal to submit their nuclear facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency?

Besides, how can one balance this policy, which is hostile to peace, in part and parcel, and the bragging before the world that the Israelis are seekers of peace? It is an endless list of questions that need no answer.

The Israeli policy is crystal clear to the entire world. As one of the UN General Assembly's resolutions stipulates, Israel is not a peace-loving state. Perhaps this phrase sums up all the words that could be said about all this irrefutable evidence.

It is regrettable that the international community, with all its influential members, is still silent over this Israeli intransigence and disregard of all international resolutions, charters, and principles. Indeed, Israel is also

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disregarding all the bases drawn up by the U.S. Administration and on which the peace process is founded. The foremost of these are the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the land-for-peace principle.

Israel nowadays is igniting southern Lebanon with the fire of its weapons and is threatening to carry out a large-scale aggression against Lebanon in every direction according to statements by Israeli leaders. Moreover, Israel is exercising the ugliest forms of terrorism and repression against our Palestinian Arab people despite the Oslo accord. They claim that this accord put the Palestinian cause on the road to a solution. However, it appears that this accord put peace at a distance and is almost turning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into an inter-Palestinian conflict.

Israel nowadays is announcing that it will not withdraw from the Golan and southern Lebanon and that it will not commit itself to UN resolutions, which stipulate that the territories and rights should return to their owners and that the continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories is inadmissible. Moreover, Israel nowadays refuses to comply with the international will and to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, 25 years after the Arabs signed it. Indeed, it also insists on continuing the policy of stockpiling conventional and nuclear weapons, and, thus, threatening pan-Arab and world security with dangers, the results of which are unpredictable.

All this serious escalation on Israel's part comes at a time when U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is preparing to pay a new visit to the region in a new attempt to rescue the peace process, which has been undermined by Israel.

There is no doubt that the U.S. Administration and Mr. Christopher are well aware of the Syrian stand and all these facts. Syria welcomed all international efforts, especially U.S. efforts, to establish peace in this region.

Syria hopes that the U.S. secretary will carry something new that could facilitate an end to the deadlock in the peace process. This new element should be represented by a clear change in the Israeli policy, which is hostile to peace and rejects its bases. Otherwise, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve a breakthrough in the peace process and peace will remain a dream undermined by Israeli intransigence and arrogance.

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Afghanistan

Government-Taleban Talks Fail Over Disarmament

LD2802113395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The new round of talks between the Taleban and Afghanistan's government has ended. Pakistan's news sources report that the negotiations which were held in the [Kabul] city center did not bear any fruit. Taleban demanded the disarmament of the Supervisory Council [Shura-ye Nezar] forces headed by Ahmad Shah Mas'ud but this was unacceptable to the government's representatives.

After the negotiations, a spokesman for [President Borhanoddin] Rabbani emphasized that the government will try to resolve its differences with the Taleban group through negotiations.

tions Criticized

LD2502183295 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Recently a reporter of a human rights defense organization [as heard] published his report on Afghanistan, in which he cites various human rights violations in Afghanistan. This has upset the Afghan state and people. What should have been revealed in the report is the real culprits of the incidents who are known to the people of Afghanistan and the world. The publication of this kind of vague report treats all equally. The people of Afghanistan and the world have seen the situation in the country over the past 3 years, and they know precisely who has trampled on all human and Islamic norms, and who continually fires shells at the innocent and defenseless people of Afghanistan. Not only have they not been satisfied by fighting in Afghanistan but they also train terrorists and export terrorism to neighboring and far away countries.

The past 3 years of fighting in the country has in fact been against terrorists and the enemies of human rights. The Afghan state has fought with all its power in this respect. If it has been unable to hold on to the necessary control at the national level, the reason for this is also very clear. So far as the Islamic State of Afghanistan is concerned, the state has not killed anyone for his political and religious belief, but it has pardoned all former criminals, too. Freedom of speech is completely observed in the state controlled areas. Correspondents and intellectuals freely express their views. Despite several problems, the state has made much effort toward women's freedom, and has given them good opportunities to work. This is a considerable act in its own right.

These are the main issues which the reporter of the human rights organization should have taken into account, and thus made his report complete by mentioning and explaining them.

Rabbani Gives Speech on Revelation of Koran Day

LD2602203895 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1630 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Speech by President Borhanoddin Rabbani on the occasion of the Revelation of Koran Day in Kabul on 26 February—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dear listeners: On the occasion of the revelation of the holy Koran a meeting was held with the participation of esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, by the department of promoting virtue and preventing vice in the mosque of the Presidential Palace. Esteemed Prof. Borhanoddin Rabbani delivered a speech on the month of Ramadan and the revelation of the holy Koran, to which we draw your attention.

[Rabbani] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] I cordially thank the department of the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice, which has arranged today's gathering to mark the day of the revelation of the holy Koran. Surely, everyone, especially the ulema, knows that the month of Ramadan is the holiest, the greatest, and the most blessed month. The Koran says that the holy Koran, which is a great source of guidance for the human society, was revealed in this month. [passage omitted] God has sent the Koran to you, the Koran which says that the Koran was sent down as clear signs of guidance and salvation. It has cleared all ways for you. There is no darkness before you. You do not have to think about where its political and economical bases came from, when a system of government comes into being, or how it is your administrative system, your national and international dealing, your cultural and social system. God has sent down the Koran as "signs of guidance." It has very clearly explained things to you. He has cleared all the paths to you so that you can walk confidently. [passage omitted]

Where should the cadres be trained? Where should they start their work? In the holy month of Ramadan. God-fearing, patient, blessed, and steadfast cadres should be trained in the month of Ramadan, the people who cannot be bought. They should not be hypocrites and the types who change their minds. They should be direct, God-fearing, and blessed elements. They should not be people who change their positions when faced with challenges like the revolutionary elements of a certain juncture, like the people who quickly leave [words indistinct] and quickly become two-faced and get carried away. They should be patient and steadfast elements. The month of Ramadan is the month of patience, the month of piety. It is in this month when pious and steadfast elements are trained to be the guardians of the Islamic regime, to be able to protect the Islamic regime. An Islamic regime can never be protected by hypocrites, or uncommitted and capricious elements. An Islamic regime cannot be protected by cowards who change their

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positions at every challenge, for instance, those who roll sometimes to one side and sometimes to another. [passage omitted]

Dear brothers, thanks to divine succor, now we rise against all challenges, against the internal tensions and those from abroad whose goal is to overthrow the Islamic regime. Although we have not been able to fulfill all of our jehadi wishes, it is a fact that the Islamic state fought very steadfastly against very dangerous challenges, the challenges posed by those who wanted to dismember the country, to overthrow the Islamic regime, to return to atheism [kufr] to enable the non-Muslims to dominate the fate of our faithful and mojahed nation and to rule it, and which failed as a result of the faithful warriors' resistence.

We hope that, God willing, the bright torch of the Islamic revolution, which did not lose its fortitude and viability in different forms of darkness—we hope that, God willing, a bright future awaits our faithful and mojahed nation and Islamic regime. We have passed through very dangerous and painful stages. Different challenges were faced. We hope that the conspirators will eventually face failure and betrayal and shame, no matter what conspiracy they resort to. They will achieve nothing. We are confident that, inspired by the source of guidance, the Koran, the faithful and sincere sons of the nation of Afghanistan will, God willing, defend the trenches of the defense of the great achievements of the Islamic revolution and jihad. The Islamic state will preserve its fortitude and stability in the face of any challenge. We hope that the enemies of Islam will face defeat and shame time and again. Our message to all of those who wish to render good things in our country—any group that wants to do something good, under any name and title and from anywhere—the criterion of the acts of all of us and every Muslim should be Islamic Sharia. No one has the right to call himself an authority over Sharia. On the contrary, our acts should proceed in the light of the Islamic Sharia. No one, under any name, has the right to perform any acts that are against the Sharia and the definite Islamic principles. If they do so, no matter who they are, they will be forcefully dismissed from Islamic society. I hope that in the holy month of Ramadan, the month of holy Koran, the month of piety and purity, the month of light and bless, the month of guidance that God will solve all our problem with his grace. I hope that the future our Islamic society's life is better. May God enable us to serve Islam and the Muslims. This word said may God forgive me and you; He is the forgiving and the merciful.

Bangladesh

Steps Taken To 'Bolster Ties' With Burma

BK2502092495 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Myanmar [Burma] national flag carrier the Myanmar Airlines [MA] this week resumed direct flight between Yangon [Rangoon] and Dhaka after seven years since it was originally started. Civil aviation officials of both Bangladesh and Myanmar have marked the event as another important phase in the building of close relations between the two neighboring countries. The deputy civil aviation minister for Myanmar and other top officials of the MA arrived in Dhaka on the first flight and were warmly received by State Minister for Civil Aviation Abdul Mannan and officials of the Civil Aviation Ministry, and the Biman Bangladesh Airlines [BBA]. The simple ceremony arranged on occasion at Zia International Airport symbolized the eagerness on both sides to strengthen this air link.

For the MA which has relatively limited international destinations, the Bangladesh capital will be an important opening. Myanmar officials said they hope to increase the frequency of flights to Dhaka. The BBA is also keen on expanding its network to the east and Yangon will be a vital stepping stone. Biman has plans to buy new aircraft, increasing its present fleet strength. Therefore, flights to Yangon on a regular basis [words indistinct] with Biman's ambition to grow into a bigger commercial airline. It is hoped that the cooperative relations between the BBA and the MA will grow from strength to strength and will diversify to new areas of aviation business.

Another vital step is being taken to bolster ties with Myanmar—Bangladesh's only other neighbor besides India with which it shares contiguous borders. It has been officially announced that the border trade between Bangladesh and Myanmar would start from March. Both the countries believe there was immense prospects for official border trade and a protocol on such trading across the frontiers of the two countries had already been signed. Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman said in Cox's Bazar town recently that the operation of the border trade accord would start from next month. The opening of the trade will immensely help the citizens of both the countries who live close to the borders on either side. Both Bangladesh and Myanmar have been steadily working toward the building of sustainable friendly relations which are mutually beneficial. Bangladesh pursues a policy of friendship with all countries. These principles have helped Bangladesh build strong and friendly ties with many countries.

Bangladesh is now a respected name in the international community. Since the advent of democracy in Bangladesh, Dhaka has further bolstered its ties with the international community. It is now a vital member in the United Nations peacekeeping force with its presence in almost all the current trouble spots in the world. As peace keepers of Bangladesh have earned a high reputation because of their quick adherence to the international rules and high standards of neutrality.

Bangladesh's relations with Myanmar suffered in 1991 when Rohingya Muslim refugees started streaming into

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Bangladesh which gave food and shelter to these Myanmar people who fled due to internal problems in their own country. Both the countries have been able to negotiate an agreement to the return of the Rohingyas to Myanmar. After a lengthy process, tens of thousands of these refugees returned to Myanmar. Nevertheless, there are still a large number of Myanmar families who are still waiting to go back home. These refugees are passing their days in agony in camps near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. It is imperative that their early return home is ensured. It will give a fillip to further ties between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Editorial Discusses SAARC's 'Uncertain' Future

BK2602134595 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 23 Feb 95 p 2

[Editorial: "SAARC Summit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There are signs that there will further difficulties in the holding of the summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC]. This time the summit conference will be held in New Delhi and is scheduled to be held from 15 to 17 April. But Pakistan has raised objections. It is being said that Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto cannot attend the summit as she will be going on a visit to the United States; hence, the date should be changed. Talks have already started at the diplomatic level to finalize a fresh date for the summit. Many people may recall that serious complexities arose on the holding of the last SAARC summit in Dhaka. The dates fixed for this summit were shifted twice and it was possible to hold the summit only after agreement on the third date. Even after all this, the Dhaka summit was a one-day meeting instead of the usual three days. The stated reason for this was that the prime minister of India had no time. It was not possible for him to stay in Dhaka for three days. Hence, the summit was held after making large-scale changes to the agenda. Before this summit, diplomats had had to face similar hurdles prior to the holding of the SAARC summit in Colombo.

A review of these incidents shows that the SAARC forum is not being ascribed its due importance. The big partners in the SAARC are responsible for this situation, as all problems originate from those countries. It seems that officials in New Delhi are becoming inclined toward the ASEAN instead of the SAARC. They very much support establishing trade links with the ASEAN. Many people are doubtful about Pakistan's stand. Some observers think that the reason for Pakistan's seeking a postponement of the summit is not due to their prime minister's visit to Washington but to its apprehension regarding the SAPTA [South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement]. Pakistan is to some extent unhappy over the adoption of a resolution during the last SAARC summit held in Dhaka regarding the implementation of the SAPTA. Many people believe that Pakistani officials have not yet taken a decision regarding this issue. For this reason they have requested a postponement of the summit under the pretext of their prime minister's visit to the United States. Like New Delhi, which has fixed its concentration on the ASEAN—the 'rising sun' in the eastern region—Pakistan seems more enthusiastic about the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization], which is a prospective alliance in the western region. Some quarters are describing the ECO as the heart of Asia.

A recent BBC commentary said that despite several programs taken by the SAARC during the past decade, this forum has failed to make any noteworthy progress in the field of regional cooperation. Neither did it make any progress on the trade and economic fronts. Many observers believe that since the launching of the SAARC in 1985, it has not achieved any significant progress or success. Several of them believe that the future of the SAARC is gradually becoming uncertain. The delay in fixing the date for the holding of the Delhi summit is similar to what happened during the last summit held in Dhaka. This signals an uncertain future for the forum. Many people believe that one of the SAARC's main faults was its decision not to take up bilateral issues for discussion at the forum. Observers feel that the strength of SAARC will increase if its mission is not diminished but expanded. Informed quarters believe it would not be a difficult task to make the SAARC a powerful organization like the ASEAN or the EEC. The only thing that is needed is firm determination.

India

Kidnapped Son of Former Minister Rescued

BK2602124695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Rajasthan, police have achieved success in getting the kidnapped son of former union minister and MP Mr. Ram Niwas Mirdha released from the kidnappers in Jaipur. Mr. Rajendra Mirdha, who arrived at his home yesterday evening, is safe. An official spokesman told our Jaipur correspondent that Mr. Mirdha was released after an encounter between the police and the kidnappers in Jagatpura Colony in Jaipur. One terrorist belonging to Khalistan Liberation Force, KLF, was shot dead while two others are absconding. Three AK-47 rifles have also been seized. The chief minister of Rajasthan, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, has congratulated the police for their success and has announced a cash award of 10 lakh rupees for the policemen who conducted the operation.

Uranium Recovered From Kidnappers

BK2802091695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Rajasthan Police has recovered a leather bag allegedly containing uranium from the place in Jaipur from where Mr. Rajendra Mirdha [son of former union minister] was rescued.

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The chief minister, Mr. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, said in New Delhi the word uranium and the name of the country from where it came were embossed on the bag. Mr. Shekhawat expressed concern over the recovery of such material and said it is being sent to Bombay for analysis.

First Time Visit for Brunei Top Officials

Press Statement Released on Talks

BK2502092095 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1501 GMT 24 Feb 95

["Press Release Dated 24th February, 1995; Joint Press Statement on the Establishment of India-Brunei Joint Committee"—ISI headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dato Lim Jock S[illegible], permanent secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam, is in New Delhi on an official visit (23-26 February) as the head of a Brunei delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This is the first ever official visit to India by any permanent secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam. Official bilateral discussions were held on 24th February 1995 between the two sides with the delegation of India being led by Shri Salman Haidar, secretary (east) in the Ministry of External Affairs. Dato Lim Jock Seng also called on the External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Ministers of State for External Affairs Shri R.L. Bhatia and Shri Salman Khursheed and Foreign Secretary Shri K. Srinivasan. There were wide-ranging talks between the two sides on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern. The talks were held in a very cordial and friendly atmosphere.

2. Keeping in mind friendly relations between the two countries, both delegations agreed to promote closer bilateral cooperation. In particular, they recognised the potential for expansion of cooperation between the two countries in trade, investment, civil aviation, manpower supply etc.

3. In view of the above, both delegations agreed to establish a joint committee, to be known as India-Brunei Darussalam Joint Committee to exchange views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern.

4. It was also agreed that the committee would be at the level of senior officials of the Ministry of External Affairs of India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam and that it would meet periodically and alternatively in each other's capital.

Joint Committee Established

BK2502101495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Brunei have decided to establish a joint committee for bilateral cooperation in trade, investment, civil aviation, and manpower supply. The official-level committee will meet periodically and alternatively in each other's capitals. The decision to form the joint committee was taken at the official talks held in New Delhi yesterday during the visit of the permanent secretary of Brunei Foreign Affairs Ministry, Mr. Datuk Lim Jock Seng. Mr. Datuk's visit to New Delhi is the first ever trip by a top official of the Brunei foreign ministry.

Commentary Sees Growing Ties With Canada

BK2402162795 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 24 Feb 95

[Commentary by Aditya Sen]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Canada are poised for a growing economic cooperation. Canada and many other countries see India now as one of the 10 big emerging markets in the world and a land of increasing opportunities. Canada seems to make the best of this economic scenario. There has been a spate of visiting business delegations from all over the world, including Canada. This is largely because of the fact that investment possibilities in India's infrastructural projects between 1994 and the year 2000 are estimated to be around $100 billion. It has also been estimated that India has got an enormous consumer market with annual value of about $200 billion.

There is evidence that Canada is slowly waking up to the enormous potential of Indian market. After former Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Vancouver in 1988 for the Commonwealth prime ministers conference, there have been two high-level visits—one from India and the other from Canada—during the last year. Indian Home Minister Mr. S.B. Chavan visited Ottawa and Toronto for a week in October last year. He had signed a treaty on mutual legal assistance, making way for cooperation in law enforcement between the two countries. This was followed by a visit of a high-level delegation of 52 companies, which was headed by the Canadian trade minister, Mr. Roy Maclaren. They found that Indian reforms are major incentives to foreign investors and the prospects are promising. Among other important economic exchanges were the visit last year of the president of the Canadian Manufacturers Association, CMA, Mr. (Stephen Vanhoutten). He had predicted that India's liberalization would improve bilateral trade relations. Another important official, Miss (Susan Brown), of the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, said after a 10-day visit to the capital, Bombay, and Pune that reform programs in India enjoy the commitment of the Indian Government. She found that among all the developing countries, the best place for the Canadian companies is India in terms of chances of success and commercial benefits. She believes that there are excellent opportunities for businessmen of the two countries in many infrastructure sectors. Canada's former Trade Commissioner in Bombay Miss (Susan

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Cartright) believes that India has unleashed its already dynamic private sector on a road to globalization. This can make India the next economic success story of Asia.

Recently, the Canadian minister of international trade and economic development, Mr. Robert (Hughe) [title and name as heard], led a 14-member delegation to Delhi comprising heads of organizations with expertise in specific areas. Addressing a business meeting in New Delhi, he said that Canada is willing to develop economic cooperation with India on an unprecedented scale. He said Canada is aware of India's tremendous potential strength in the world scene, as has been revealed by the spate of visiting delegations from all over the world to India, who speak volumes of the growing business and investment opportunities in India.

Canada has offered to India to have joint ventures in a wide range of core sectors, including power, construction, transportation, technology fabrication, and infrastructure development. Canada has also identified several sectors for technology transfer to India, like airport development, telecommunications, machine instrumentation, oil and gas exploration and environment monitoring; but despite all these opportunities, Indo-Canadian trade has remained limited to $500 million during the last three years. The reason being a large chunk of Canada's trade is transacted with the U.S.-led North American Free Trade Area, NAFTA, a regional grouping between the USA, Canada, and Mexico. The 18-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, APEC, also takes away a great share of foreign trade of Canada. Since Canada is more involved in NAFTA, many American industries which are coming up in India will have Canadian participation. Apart from it, Canada is now endeavoring to move away from the domination of one or two economies to new markets like India. Both India and Canada have felt the need to explore the areas of opportunities and to take concrete steps for expanding mutual trade.

Paper Sees Benefits of Pakistan-India Forum

BK2702114395 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 27 Feb 95 p 8

[Editorial: "People's mandate"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The just-concluded convention of the Pakistan-India Forum for Peace and Democracy was a historic attempt by ordinary people to wrest Indo-Pak relations from the clutches of the self-serving political, civil and military "masters" in Islamabad and New Delhi. The extraordinary congress of the citizens of the two countries is particularly poignant considering their nearly half-a-century of history baptised in blood. Beginning with the violent and tragic Partition, Indo-Pak relations have been characterised by brazenly armed uneasy peace, punctuated by three brief but bitter wars. The subcontinent has the dubious distinction of being the only corner of the post-Cold War world where exists a balance of terror by atomic and thermo-nuclear capabilities. All this acquires a paradoxical connotation when South Asia is seen as the poorest nook on the globe riven by sectarian conflicts that demand complete attention of the State to the tasks of development and positive nation building. Against this backdrop, the independent initiative taken by distinguished citizens on both sides of the border to facilitate a people-to-people interaction could mark a new and bold chapter in the seemingly unending South Asian turbulence. The benign official indifference of Pakistani and Indian governments to the meeting also is a blessing in disguise—the rumblings of some in the Pakistan media and private displeasure of a few vested interests in India notwithstanding.

There are many sceptics, well-intentioned and ill-disposed who question the utility of such nongovernmental discussions in the face of intransigence of the two ruling establishments. All the participants in the New Delhi meeting, designated to thrash out ways and means of conflict resolution are leaders in their own right in different walks of life—ranging from the fine and performing arts, journalism, professional and humanitarian fields, not to mention former members of the civil and military sectors. No Government worth its votes can ignore the resolve of a grouping that is a microcosm of the two societies. And unlike the Defense-sponsored and security-dominated Nimrana initiative, the Pakistan-India Forum is not beholden to any government or party which gives it credibility, and given the all-encompassing scope of its agenda, the exercise has a holistic perspective which redeems the bilateral relations from being hostage to a few insurmountable issues. In other words, for whatever they are worth, the conclusions of the New Delhi session can be safely deemed to be the mandate of the peoples of the two countries. This is not to suggest that the Forum or its activities is panacea for the endemic afflictions of Indo-Pak relations. However, if the record of such confidence-building measures between the United States and Soviet Union during the Cold War and between the Palestinians and Israelis is anything to go by, non-governmental exercise at conflict resolution will at least contribute to de-escalation of tensions, if not their resolution.

'Eminent Economists' Issue Statement

BK2702135695 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 26 Feb 95 p 12

["Full text" of a "joint statement on the state of the economy" issued by "eminent economists" N.K. Chandra, Arun Ghosh, I.S. Gulati, P.C. Joshi, Krishna Raj, N. Krishnaja, K.S. Krishnaswamy, C.T. Kurien, Ashok Mitra, Deepak Nayyar, Prabhat Patnaik, K.N. Raj, and S.P. Shukla on 25 February; place not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The nation, according to most indications, is about to enter a phase of political uncertainty. Economic factors have contributed in large measure to this development. The vulnerable sections of our

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population have been adversely affected by the set of policies pursued since 1991. The disillusionment is finding expression in the election results from the States. In these circumstances, the possibility of significant political changes that could affect the Government at the Centre cannot be ruled out. The compulsion of events may also persuade those in authority to re-think economic reforms.

Despite six good monsoons in a row, the nation has continued to be in the throes of double-digit inflation, concentrated mostly in the prices of food and necessities. The stabilisation and adjustment programme has, at the same time, led to a sharp decline in the rate of economic growth, associated with an increase in unemployment. Rising food prices combined with growing unemployment have aggravated the incidence of poverty, particularly in the rural sector.

The improvement in the balance of payments situation, which is being portrayed as an index of success of the reforms, is illusory. The accumulation of foreign exchange reserves is based on borrowing abroad, which is adding to external debt—already amounting to more than $92 billion—and portfolio and NRI [nonresident Indian] investment inflows which are both footloose and volatile. The calamity that has overtaken Mexico suggests that excessive dependence on such transient sources of finance is full of peril.

The adjustment in the fiscal system has placed emphasis on a reduction in public expenditure. Wasteful expenditure should indeed be eliminated. But the axe has fallen on public investment in infrastructure and outlays in the social sectors. Even so, the revenue deficit of the Union Government has kept growing. In the name of tax reform, tax rates are being reduced while the base of taxation is narrowed. This strategy, we are convinced, cannot provide a sustainable solution to the fiscal crisis. The burden of fiscal adjustment is, it seems, being borne by the state governments; the resource transfer has diminished even as their borrowing powers remain severely constrained, thereby stultifying development activities at the grassroots level. Attempts at improving the fiscal health of the Union Government at the expense of the states have to be resisted.

We are also deeply concerned at certain other recent developments. The sale of shares of public sector enterprises, in the name of privatisation, in a manner that is not transparent and at prices that are significantly below market value, is a prime example. The spate of agreements with large international firms in the power, petroleum and telecommunication sectors on terms that are not determined either in the market place or through competitive bidding represents an unprecedented compromise of national economic interests. The Government, in our view, has abdicated its role in the belief that markets know best. For countries such as India, however, deregulation without a system of governance to ensure checks and balances, is a recipe for chaos.

We are equally disturbed by what we consider the increasingly defeatist stand by the Government in bilateral and international discussions and negotiations, manifested, for instance, in the extraordinarily generous tariff and trade concessions to advanced industrial countries without any reciprocal benefits for ourselves. Similarly, the alacrity with which the Patents Act has been sought to be amended through an Ordinance, dispensing with public or parliamentary debate, has implications that are both ominous and far-reaching.

The focus of economic policy, in our view, has to be brought back on the objective of accelerating the pace of growth of income and employment. A stepping up of the domestic rate of capital formation, especially of public investment, is essential for raising the rate of growth. This must be financed by an increase in domestic savings, since the annual inflow of direct foreign investment is less than even one-fourth of 1 per cent of gross domestic product. Given this context, we are perturbed that savings as a proportion of gross domestic product has actually declined at a steep rate over the past three years and is much lower than in most Asian countries. A major contributory factor for this decline is official encouragement of unbridled consumption and a shift in the climate of morality and ethics. All this has to be reversed.

If public investment, especially in areas of infrastructure, rural development, health, mass literacy and education, is to be increased, and the propensity to placate multinational companies—which bring in little direct foreign investment but take over the commanding heights of the economy—is to be reduced, a surplus has then to be generated in the Government budget. Pruning unproductive expenditure, including on defence, is crucial for the purpose. At the same time, tax revenue, which has been declining as a proportion of national income because of official policies, must be raised.

As far as the agricultural sector is concerned, higher investment rather than interminable increase in procurement prices is the key to growth in employment and incomes.

The nation is enthusiastically being pushed into the international system. This very fact however compels us to be careful. The strategic and economic interests of the nation must be preserved, otherwise we may end up globalising prices without globalising incomes, and ceding spaces of sovereign decisions making without acquiring any significant role in the prevailing global system. We have to put emphasis on exports of manufactured goods, but have to be circumspect before placing inordinate stress on farm exports, as that might lead to domestic scarcity and spiralling inflation. We are not in favour of a return to the mindless bureaucratism underlying the control regime of the past; some controls over imports are however unavoidable; restrictions on the entry of luxury consumption goods must continue.

We are equally convinced that the public distribution system must not only be maintained, but further

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extended for the sake of the poor and middle classes. It hardly makes any sense to bear the cost of carrying a stockpile of foodgrains exceeding 30 million tonnes even as millions of our countrymen go without food.

Above all, the process of development must be brought closer to the people, this requires effective devolution of decision-making from the Centre to the States and from the States to local bodies.

The signatories to the statement are: N K Chandra, Arun Chosh, I S Gulati, P C Joshi, Krishna Raj, N Krishnaja, K S Krishnaswamy, C T Kurien, Ashok Mitra, Deepak Nayyar, Prabhat Patanik, K N Raj, S P Shukla.

Paper Applauds World Bank Loans to States Directly

BK2702123495 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 27 Feb 95 p 11

[Editorial: "Banking on the states"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Union government's agreement in principle to allow the World Bank group to lend directly to the state governments is a logical step forward in the policy reform process that began with the dismantling of industrial licensing. The fact is that decades of licensing were marked by a contradiction—opposition ruled states complaining about discriminatory licensing of the Cong (I) ruled Centre, even as some of them like Kerala and West Bengal did little to improve the climate for industrial investment. It was a classic case of irresponsibility bred by lack of power. All this has changed as soon as industrial licensing was abolished, leading to almost a scramble among the states to outdo each other in attracting investment.

There is a chance of something similar happening with the Central government somewhat reluctantly relinquishing the power to direct ODA to states it may wish to favour. A recent case in point was that of the West Bengal government being disallowed from availing the credit that the then Soviet government was willing to offer for the state's Bakreswar thermal power project. Apart from ending the inequity of the Centre making a big margin of about seven percent on ODA loans, on the plea it bore a notional exchange risk when the exchange rate itself was determined by it, the new move is likely to have a wholly beneficial effect on the direction of such lending, its eventual utilisation and the externalities that the state governments can reap from such lending.

The World Bank rightly thinks that its job of reforming the Union government is almost over. As New Delhi is not likely to approach it for large structural adjustment loans in the near future, its ability to influence administrative practices there is limited. On the other hand, the reform process has hardly started in the states and they are all in desperate need of cash. So what better way for the bank to find new customers in order to remain in business than start dealing directly with the state governments? This is necessary because as much as over $20 billion of committed funding remains unutilised. Since the Centre is unable to get the states to speed up the projects for which these funds are intended, why not pass on to the bank the responsibility of dealing directly with the user governments?

Those who oppose such moves do so for both historical and economic reasons. Indian history is replete with instance of the central authority weakening whenever foreigners were allowed to deal directly with local satraps. However, the context has changed with the globalisation of economic activity and the imperative need to decentralise economic decision making in the interests of efficiency. The other, and stronger, argument is that the states should not be allowed to negotiate loans on their own when any default by them is bound to eventually devolve on the central government. As the gradual convertibility of the rupee is slowly removing the need for the central government to actually sanction the dollars before state government can buy them for repayment, the hub of the matter is really who is or should be the ultimate guarantor of the loans. There can be no central counter guarantee for such loans, Within such confines, if the World Bank group is able to devise an arrangement under which it could lend directly to the state projects, there is no reason for the Centre to muscle its way into such arrangements. The fewer the parties to a deal, the better are the chances of the deal coming off.

Commentary Reaffirms, Suggests Economic Reforms

BK2402114195 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 24 Feb 95 p 8

[Commentary by S.L. Rao, director-general of the National Council for Applied Economic Research: "Need for consolidation"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Since 1991, India has had to go through major economic policy changes at the macro level in order to make economic growth sustainable and to control the various adverse features in the balance of paymnents, foreign exchange reserves, inflation and foreign trade. Till 1993, therefore, economic, rather than political factors, deominated the budget. The last budget (1994) was somewhat more poltiical in nature. The crisis situation had passed and it appeared that the budget had become more subject to political influences. Thus, fiscal deficit was not to the levels tentatively projected in the early reform years. At the same time, however, the budget continued its task with considerable reforms in the tax structure, and the consequent revival of industry, with booming tax collections.

The year 1995 is likely to see the dominance of political factors in the formulation of the budget. However, it is unlikely that sound economic management which was brought into the budgets in the earlier years, will be given the go-by.

In my view, the budget should have the following objectives: 1) improve the growth of the Indian economy from

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an estimated 5.3 per cent this year to 6.5 per cent in 1995-96; 2) bring down the fiscal deficit from the likely 6 per cent in 1994-95 to a maximum of 5 per cent in 1995-96; 3) keep inflation below double digits, at the average rate of 9 per cent; 4) signal to the world that the Indian reforms continue; 5) continue the process of tax reforms so that the reach of taxation is improved, administration is further simplified and better balance between different taxes at various production stages is maintained; 6) provide stimulus for increased investment by industry in R&D, and on training at all levels; 7) ensure that the poor and destitute sections of the Indian population get adequate food at prices they can afford, and rations at frequent intervals than the present fortnightly ration from the PDS; 8) significantly improve the delivery system of social services—health, primary education and nutrition for pregnant women; 9) introduce a modicum of social security for the aged, widows, handicapped and unemployed; 10) except for food subsidies which must increase along with better targeting and delivery, and some rationalisation of fertiliser subsidies, begin the process of elimination of all other explicit and implicit support and subsidies—to public sector enterprises, research institutions, higher education, posis, railways, LPO, etc.

These objectives may appear to be in conflict with one another and some are in the sphere of the states. What needs to be done is to make them consistent with one another.

The Government's revenue must rise. Last year's budget has demonstrated that simplification of the classifications and procedures gives a boost to collection even with reduced tax rates. There is very high tax evasion in India, especially of personal income tax, capital gains tax, excise duty and customs duty. At the state level the evasion is probably an even larger proportion for sales tax, property tax, and octroi [interstate commerce tax]. If evasion could be curbed, India could proceed with all the desired social programmes and at the same time bring down the government deficits. Presumptive taxes introduced last year, have not been effective so far, but they must be pursued energetically, and extended to cover professionals. Service tax also needs to reach many other service areas.

The public enterprise system takes a disproportionate amount of government time and has locked up vast government resources. These resources, if made liquid, could help to significantly reduce the public debt and bring down the single largest item of government expenditure—interest paid on borrowings. There is no longer any good argument against the Government's privatising its enterprises. Many state governments have already begun to do so. The disinvestment of small percentage of public enterprises' equity over the last three years only helped to reduce the government deficit. It has done nothing to distance the Government from the managements to distance the Government from the managements of the PSEs or to increase their autonomy. A programme of privatisation must now be implemented. The immediate target must be for the Government to remove itself from ownership of enterprises in the service areas and in consumer goods industries. At the same time, attempts must be made to improve the performance of the inefficient enterprises. One immediate action might be to move the Bureau of Public Enterprises into the control of the Ministry of Finance and make it into a purely statistical department, shedding all its powers to harmonise public sector wages and salaries, procedure and working. The boards of these enterprises must be reconstituted with induction of well- qualified and independent professionals as nominees on them. The boards must be left alone to manage the enterprises.

Apart from the public enterprise system, there are others in the public sector like Railways, Posts and Telegraphs, Telecommunications, Ordnance factories, etc. Little effort has been made to look at their financial performance in terms of the standard parameters return on capital. Here also there is considerable scope for improvement.

The engine for growth in the coming years will be industry and within that, manufacturing. Every possible effort to ensure investment in new capacities, technologies, etc must be made. That companies do not misuse for speculation the money raised in the market must also be ensured.

We must minimise the inflationary impact of foreign insitutional investments. The volatility of foreign institutional investments must also be controlled. Since the Mauritius route for such foreign investments which enables them to escape the penalty of short-term capital gains tax is now being used by most foreign institutions, some way to prevent this leakage must be found.

Hopefully, there will also be greater co-ordination in action by other ministries of the Government at the same time as the budget, e.g. the Kalkar Committee report on fuel pricing needs to be implemented soon. Public regulatory authorities for matters now decided behind closed doors must be set up. A Tariff Commission to keep reviewing the rates and keep a balance between excise and custom duties, as well as quickly react to dumping in India, must also be brought into being.

The efficiency in governments has to improve. It is the inefficiency, especially of state governments in using the funds allocated to them for different programmes, that is largely responsible for large unutilised foreign loans, considerable delays in implementation of investment projects in agriculture and other areas, poor delivery of social services, and a variety of other such problems. Instead of looking at the Pay Commission as in the past, just as a vehicle for increasing the salaries of government servants, there must be an attempt to bring about a balance between rights and responsibilities of government servants. Unfortunately, the term 'exit policies' is applied only to public sector enterprises and surplus industrial labour. It must also apply to government staff and government agencies.

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The budget might usefully explore whether grants to the states from the Centre for specific social programmes could be related to an evaluation of the extent of delivery to the target populations in each state. This could be evaluated through sample studies.

With these measures, revenue could increase, efficiency could be improved, and resources relesed for the substantial additions required to improve the quality of life and opportunities for the poorest sections of the Indian population. This could be achieved with sustainable growth and more modest levels of inflation than in recent years.

Privatization of Education, Health Sectors Viewed

BK2702085495 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Commentary by R.C. Rajamani]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Education, health, and employment are the major indices of a nation's progress. Consequently, the government's responsibility in these crucial areas can hardly be overemphasized. The areas are also the cornerstones on which any modern welfare state stands. India, since independence, has taken these responsibilities in right earnest. Government's concern in these areas had been reflected in successive five-year plans beginning from 1952. There has been a regular increase in investment in education, health, employment and other social sectors such as rural development. Education is the catalyst which leads to human resource development comprising better health and nutrition, improved socioeconomic opportunities, and a beneficial natural environment for all.

The current economic reforms somewhat led to some doubts in certain circles about the continued role of the government in these sectors. Will these areas be left to the private sector? Will the government gradually wash its hands off from these primary responsibilities? These questions have been debated time and again in recent years. A couple of days ago, eminent economists at a meeting in Delhi called for a step up in public investment to strengthen areas of infrastructure, rural development, health, and education. In a happy coincidence, as if in an assuring response, the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has reiterated the government's continued role in these social sectors. Addressing medical professionals and academicians in Chandigarh yesterday, he categorically stated that health, education, and employment cannot be completely left to the private sector. These are much too important areas to be left exclusively to the market forces. In fact, Dr. Singh was only echoing the government's stated policy of maintaining a human face to the economic reforms.

Education for all and health for all by 2000 AD are two of the major challenges the government has taken up. Investment in these two sectors has witnessed considerable increase over the last eight plans. Yet, the ambitious target of giving 6 percent of GDP to investment and education has still eluded planners; obviously, due to strains on the economy from other nonsocial sectors.

Iran

Former Central Bank Official Arrested

95LA0121B Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in English 21 Dec 94 p 32

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran—The former Deputy Central Bank Governor for Foreign Exchange Asghar Fakhreyah Kashan has been arrested by security forces on charges of illegal contacts with foreigners, disclosed an informed source here Wednesday [21 December].

The source who requested not to be identified by name said Kashan was arrested after his illegal contacts with foreigners was confirmed.

There has, so far, been no official announcement of Kashan's arrest.

Kashan who was also a member of the Board of Directors of the central Bank has been a close aide of former Central Bank Governor Mohammad Hussein Adeli who is now an economic advisor to President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Adeli appointed Kashan as his deputy for foreign exchange affairs on July 11, 1990. On December 22, 1993 Kashan lost his post but was immediately appointed Deputy Central Bank Governor for International Affairs.

Kashan was in charge of the personnel department of Central Bank before the 1979 Islamic revolution, but he continued work in another department after the revolution. He played an important role in curbing general strikes during the shah's regime.

It is said he was a member of the Iranian delegation in Algeria in the early years after the revolution for discussing Iran-U.S. financial differences. Opposition and skepticism was voiced for his inclusion in the delegation but that was ignored. He then went to Britain apparently to continue his studies there.

It was during Kashan's tenure of office that the Central Bank was offering $5,000 for every applicant daily. That policy failed and was described as a "blow" to the country's banking system.

He was also a member of the Iranian delegation to discuss the issue of Egyptian debts to Iran in Cairo last year.

Intelligence Officer Infiltrates MKO

Part One of Interview

LD2502224195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1810 GMT 25 Feb 95

["Part one" of interview with intelligence officer Mohammad Reza Edalatiyan, infiltrator into the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, by unidentified correspondent and Mr. Mir-Hosayni; place and date not given—recorded]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] We have invited Mr. Mohammad Reza Edalatiyan, who participated in a mission and has returned to Iran. He is here to explain things for us. Our brother Mr. Mir-Hosayni is also participating in the program as researcher. We will also enjoy his views on the issue. Thank you, Mr. Edalatiyan, for accepting our invitation to appear on this program. We also thank you, Mr. Hosayni. God willing, we shall have an enlightening and useful program for the dear compatriots and the dear viewers. I call on the gentlemen to start their debate with our dear viewers. Please start, Mr. Edalatiyan.

[Edalatiyan] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Edalatiyan, please tell us your views on infiltration of enemy grouplets. Then we will talk about your own mission.

[Edalatiyan] One of the necessary debates for showing the strengths of the revolution in all fields is that of intelligence and the intelligence war with the enemies of Islam. One of the debates in this vast field is regarding infiltration among enemy forces, the Zionist or antirevolutionary grouplets.

[Correspondent] How much did you manage to infiltrate. We want to know about your own mission.

[Edalatiyan] Thank God and with his blessing we managed to attain our aims. In one of the MKO sections responsible for sending forces into the country to create chaos on the borders, and to dispatch teams to cause damage, I managed to advance up to the level of manager. I was completely aware of the planning, the times of traffic, the location of the targets, the numbers and coordination with the Iraqi Government, and intelligence.

[Mir-Hosayni] What were the aims of the Intelligence Ministry in infiltrating the hypocrites?

[Edalatiyan] We could debate the hypocrites from a social point of view. For example, we could say that their social importance is less than zero. But we could also debate it from the view of the Intelligence Ministry. This debate states that the enemy should not be underestimated, even though they might have no influence and might not be in society. It is important to supervise groups that are much less important than the hypocrites. This is because the world arrogance might use them. But when we speak of the aims of the mission, a person who enters the hypocrites' organization to infiltrate has a particular aim. This might be a long-term or a short-term aim. These depend on his own particular case. The aim is a secret and is known only to the individual. But some other aims are common between all individuals who infiltrate the hypocrites' grouplet. One of the issues important to us is their presence in Iraq and the creation of problems on the borders. They could send five or six people onto our soil to plant mines or attack bunkers. We want to prevent even such acts. One of our aims is to get intelligence regarding their relations with Zionists and foreign countries. Another aim is to evaluate their forces, to know about the quality and quantity of their forces, in terms of military capital. To know the things that they do. Another aims is the knowledge of the plots that they carry out abroad in order to attract and deviate young people. Another aim to understand their contacts with Iraq. This is due to issues related to the Iran-Iraq war and its aftermath. As you know, the hypocrites were a mercenary grouplet dependent on Iraq and they spied for Iraq. These are the general aims that we commonly and generally follow.

[Mir-Hosayni] I made a note of something you said and that was the fact that one of the aim was their contacts with foreign Zionists. The aim of these contacts is to provide intelligence. The operations of this group has proved this. What are their sources of intelligence? How do they get their intelligence inside the country? What are their sources inside the country and abroad?

[Edalatiyan] As far as the hypocrites are concerned, the issue does not end with the transfer of intelligence and information. The hypocrites, after the deadlocks created for them and the blows that they have suffered, are now trying to serve foreign intelligence organizations and to carry out operations and aims that these organizations have in mind. But another part of the debate is related to the collection of the intelligence and its transfer.

[Correspondent] Are you saying that they initially try to pretend to be a totally submissive grouplet in order to achieve their aim?

[Edalatiyan] Yes, one of the debates is concerned with this, especially in practical terms. For example, in 1987 the hypocrites coordinated with the Saudis and sent a team to Mecca in Saudi Arabia to participate in the massacre of the pilgrims. It was not a case of transferring intelligence at all.

[Mir-Hosayni] Do you have any document and evidence?

[Edalatiyan] Yes. The evidence is available. There were even some hypocrites who later committed suicide because of this event, the massacre of the pilgrims. Or the case of killing the Iraqi Shiites has nothing to do with the transfer of intelligence. They say that we want to be an instrument for the Iraqi Government. One analysis of this debate is that if we do not join the Iraqi Army and suppress the Shiites, something like the Iranian situation will happen. We have to participate in the suppression. The point that you made is correct.

They manage to receive some information one way or another because they are Iranian and familiar with the language and they provide the intelligence organization with this information. One of the main sources of intelligence, which might seem ridiculous, is the debate

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in the newspapers and publications of the country. Their philosophy is that they are an opposition to the Islamic Revolution in Iran; otherwise, what little is left of them would have been destroyed.

The debate on their relations to the intelligence organizations has different aspects, the most important of which is their cooperation with the Iraqi intelligence. Use of telephones for obtaining intelligence is mainly done from Iraq.

Another issue is their cooperation with the Jordanian intelligence organization. The main part of their work abroad is concerned with European and especially the American intelligence service.

[Mir-Hosayni] Regarding your aim as a infiltrating element: You were in connection with them for some time, and you pointed to certain aims. How much were you able to achieve?

[Edalatiyan] Thank God, now, when we go into the discussion on the mission I will explain how we achieved our aim. The aim of the mission in Iraq, which took over a year, was attained. Thank God the result was good. Returning to Iran and being here is because the mission had total success. As for the aim of the mission, well, the mission continues and there are things that it are not possible to say now.

[Mir-Hosayni] Do the hypocrites now know that you were one of the colleagues of the Intelligence Ministry and that you had infiltrated them? Do you think your mission was a success, or are the results so clear that they are confessing to it?

[Edalatiyan] They are faced with a crisis of infiltration. As an organization they are facing the problem of infiltration. They cannot even trust the people around them. Even the head of the hypocrites is not sure of the five or six people around him. He lives in an area under total guard of Iraqi forces. None of their forces is able to go there. When he wants to attend a meeting, all of the forces are searched with electronic equipment in case they have something metal with them. Infiltration has caused a crisis. Look at the interviews given by former members who have left the organization. They came to Iran and gave interviews. See how much the issue of infiltration is being discussed. The crisis I refer to is real. In Germany the hypocrites sacked 14 people at once.

[Correspondent] What you say about a crisis is correct. But under such conditions it is also harder to infiltrate. That crisis makes infiltration harder. I would like to know the methods of infiltrating the hypocrites' organization, especially among the leadership. How did you manage to get there?

[Edalatiyan] I would like to add something to this statement: The more they become aware of the problem of infiltration, the more difficult it will be for them to deal with it. It is not possible to talk about it now. But when they are totally destroyed the issue will be clear, and my statement will be clear that the more they become aware of the issue the greater the difficulty of dealing with it. With the increase of this difficulty it becomes easier for us to infiltrate them. You referred to instruments and methods. Well, we know things.

It might not be a bad idea to mention the brothers at the Ministry of Intelligence, who are the real soldiers of the Imam of Time. My training, dispatch, and coordination was in their hands. They have continual analysis of the situation and know the new methods and instruments that might be needed. The methods and instruments are secret and classified, but one of the strongest instruments is training—and the infiltrators are armed with training.

One of the debates in training is the way the infiltrator uses the nature and elements in the infiltrated organization. In the hypocrites' organization there are many elements at the disposal of the infiltrator. We can point to these elements as means and instruments. One of the main elements in the hypocrites organization is the dictatorship ruling the organization, from the top to the bottom. Even if a person is vigilant and intelligent enough to announce that he has discovered an infiltrator, they would not accept it because they totally believe that everything must come from the top. One of the things that we use very much is the censorship that is completely dominant. The people inside Iraq are basically cut off from the outside world. They have no contacts with the outside world. They see only a half-hour video program that is prepared for them every day. They are kept busy with minor issues of so-called reform so they do not come in contact with the realities of the outside world. Although from a humanitarian point of view it is a tragedy for people to be under such censorship, this can be used as an instrument of infiltration. Another issue that we used extensively is the debate of feminism among them. They believe that women are superior, even though they might be illiterate or without knowledge and pabilities.

[Correspondent] Do they believe this or do they say it?

[Edalatiyan] There is no issue of belief among the hypocrites. They do not believe in anything. They do not even have a school of thought. They are a jumble of everything. Their debate on the issue of women is because their leader, after the revolution and freedom from prison, came to the conclusion that men ask more questions and might leave if they are put under too much pressure and that men do not come under his control and leadership as easily. He therefore started some theoretical debates saying that women should be freed and liberated. This is because a woman who is living in Iraq under their captivity is not able to leave. They therefore use and exploit them. But this is also an instrument for infiltration, because none of their women can resist our debriefing. In my own experience of several years ,whenever I faced difficulty in obtaining some information I would go to one of them, especially the women. It is very

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easy to use the format of their organization. One of the other issues was the history of cooperation with the organization.

[Correspondent] When speaking of infiltration and difficulties of infiltration, the issues of physical tactics and military training are secondary. In order words, when someone such as yourself as an employee of the Intelligence Ministry wants to infiltrate, you need to know their community. You need to understand their mentality in the situation that you want to go into from a human and psychological points of view, in order to understand their weak points. Therefore, military training and use of instruments and means are of course important but more significant is the need to study them and train.

[Edalatiyan] The whole thing is based on training. What you mention, the sociology and understanding of relations—I do not want to enter into the debate—is totally relevant to the hypocrites. Even the daily issues are followed by the Ministry of Intelligence to know what is going on daily. Why were decisions or changes made? But regarding the debate on infiltration and the generalities of infiltration, I only used 15 percent of my training. The training had a much higher standard. [passage omitted]

Part Two of Interview

LD2602224295 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1810 GMT 26 Feb 95

["Part two" of interview with intelligence officer Mohammad Reza Edalatiyan, infiltrator into the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, by unidentified correspondent and Mr. Mir-Hosayni; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] At the present these people in the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization [MKO] are in a defensive position. That is, they are at least 95 percent passive, if not 100 percent. They used to win supporters, but their supporters are deserting them. When the former members understand the true nature of this group, they leave and turn against the faction and its leadership cadre. What attracts them to the organization in the first place? What motives are created to win supporters?

[Edalatiyan] I explained this in my earlier discussion on their tricks. [passage omitted] They attract Iranians abroad by luring them with promises. For example, they promise to obtain refugee status for those who have nowhere to go. Or they promise to obtain a U.S. green card for the refugees. They say, Come and stay with us for a couple of months until we find you a place. Let us live together. You do no have to worry about your living expenses.

There were many examples of illiterate refugees who knew nothing about living in a foreign country. They were approached in Turkey with the promise of a job. One was enticed with the promise of a job in a third country. He was then sent to Iraq by plane. When he realized that he had been cheated, he returned to Iran and is now living happily at home. As soon as they recruit a new member, they confiscate his passport. An individual abroad without a passport is helpless. They can easily threaten to report them to the police on trumped up charges. Often the new recruits are poor and have no money to travel. They provide free air tickets to lure them. For example, they might offer a free return flight ticket to a person to travel from America to France and return.

[Correspondent] Who offers the highest financial assistance? Which countries, apart from the United States and Iraq, assist them financially?

[Edalatiyan] I do not wish to discuss this issue in length. Other countries offer financial assistance. The main objective is to keep this organization going as a threat against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The assistance comes from some of the European countries too.

It is very funny that we were at a meeting with the wife of the hypocrites' [MKO] gang leader [Masud Rajavi and his wife Maryam]. She would hand out future jobs to those present. She would appoint future governors general and mayors. I foud the whole thing so ridiculous that I had to force myself to stop laughing. She has the status of president herself. [passage omitted]

[Mir-Hosayni] I remained quiet so that Edalatiyan could finish his remarks and so that he would not lose his train of thought. He referred to the previous cooperation he had with the MKO, and he apparently lost several members of his family [killed as MKO members during operations]. With this background, he underwent a change and reembraced Islam and continued thereafter as a soldier of Islam. Can you tell us the reasons for this change. What factors led you to change to abandon that background and to undertake this infiltration?

[Edalatiyan] I think the answer may be clear from all the things I have said so far. From the beginning of the revolution, the manner in which the Islamic Republic has dealt with its enemies, with grouplets, with misguided forces has been based on faith and deep thought. It is clear to everyone today that, even when faced with terrorist groups, it is not a question of merely military confrontation. Look, maybe this has not been announced so far, but since the start of the revolution, the Intelligence Ministry and before that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corp's intelligence department, have destroyed dozens of groups who were affiliated to and brought into being by foreign intelligence services. Much of this destruction had to do with the enlightenment brought about in the forces of those groups; had to do with their ideas and a change in their way of thinking. Ideological confrontation is an issue which has deep roots in the Islamic Republic.

In particular, in relation to the MKO, the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran have tried very hard to demonstrate that their apparent slogans stating that they are

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Muslims, that they are against the United States, their dramatic and adventurous slogans have no actual content or substance; they are passing issues which are easily forgotten, and young people must not succumb to such ploys. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. Please go ahead Mr. Mir-Hosayni.

[Mir-Hosayni] I want to mention another point. It is the issue of your return after the completion of your mission. I mean when you have concluded you mission how did you enter [our] country?

[Correspondent] In another word you can tell us about the exciting part of your mission. Please tell us how did you enter [that country] and which route did you take. How did you return home?

[Edalatiyan] When it was decided that we should.....

[Correspondent, interrupting] Please excuse me. Could you also refer to another point, that is if you have any documents or evidence that they [MKO] could not deny it. [Evidence is needed to prove your claims] as they might come up and reject [your claims], after this television programme was aired. If you have such evidence, please give full explanation.

[Edalatiyan] I have many documents. Evidence related to the recent mission has been published in the hypocrites' newsletter and our photographs were shown on Iraqi television. It was an occasion about which I will talk later. After I went through training on the instruction of the Ministry of Intelligence and received the special briefings, it was decided that we should complete the intended mission. We went to Turkey at the Iran-Turkey border and remained for sometime within the hypocrite organization. Then we were transferred from Jordan to Iraq.

Before we left, we cooperated with the hypocrite inside the country on passing or controlling information to them and other issues we had in mind. This process continued for a few months, and then the hypocrites told me to come. Our aim was also ultimately to have access to Iraq. Once in Iraq, we were organized within those groups which were involved in border offensive. This is a part of a secret section in Iraq, and the Iraqi intelligence service has control over it. The groups are being trained, and Iraq has direct control over the training. Intelligence officers supervise all activities. My information about this is second-hand. It was part of hypocrite classified information, and not everyone was aware of Iraqi intelligence officers' involvement.

The reason the hypocrites were sensitive about it was that they wanted to prove that they has a strong force inside the country. For example, these forces can carry out military operations along Khuzestan border. However, it raises a question: If such a force exists inside the country, why should it operate along Khuzestan border. Why does it not operate in Ahvaz, or why does it not carry out operation in Tehran?

The hypocrites wanted to conceal the identity of these forces and no one should know about them. For example, they disguised us in the uniform of Iraq's Presidential Guards and transferred us to the borders. Then we went four or five km into Iranian territory, fired a few shots, and returned. For example, in one of their very important targets, they had a region in mind in Ilam to plant an explosion in a oil pipeline. [passage omitted]

A group of the hypocrites came to Ilam to cause an explosion in a oil pipeline, a remote area of Ilam which was not even protected. One of their own men, Jamal Shamali, as a result of much pressure and many problems, fired on his own group. He killed several of them. Then, he surrender to the Law Enforcement Forces and came to Iran and is now living with his family. [passage omitted]

We came with a group to Khuzestan and this group wanted to carry out an operation. The operational group intended to attack a position. The positions of Iranians have been unmanned for a long time since the establishment of a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq. The interesting fact is that when they were attacking the unmanned positions they were releasing huge figures on damages caused to the vehicles and military equipment of the Islamic Republic. [passage omitted]

Anyway, this group entered the country and wanted to implement its plan. During the operation there were several shepherds in the region. They would bring their flock of sheep in the border region at around four or five o'clock in the morning, and they are not far from the borders. Those in charge of the group said that we must kill these shepherds because they are the agents of the regime.

In view of the fact that our mission was ending and the fact that they wanted to kill a number of innocent people, we opened fire on the MKO rather than kill the shepherds. As a result, four of the MKO members were killed and two of them were injured and escaped. Thanks to God, they were not able to find out how they were attacked. Then they published our names in their newsletter as some of the men killed in the operation.

[Correspondent] Did you manage to fulfill your mission during this period. Have you obtain the information you wanted? Or did you attack the hypocrites just to prevent the killing of the shepherds, and then returned?

[Edalatiyan] If the real purpose was not met, the brothers would have not signalled me to return. The mission was fulfilled with great success. We receive a message to return three weeks before the incident. They have shown the photos of six people, including myself, on Iraqi television. They said that we are their men who were killed and this is Mohammad Reza Edalatiyan, a

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member of mojahadin organization and heroic martyrs who worked for us for sometimes and have been killed.

You earlier referred to evidence: In their newsletter No. 336, they have announced the name of six persons as those killed from their side in that incident which includes my name, Mohammad Reza Edalatiyan. The hypocrites still do not understand what has happened and who has attacked them.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. Do you have any question Mr. Mir-Hosayni?

[Mir-Hosayni] Thank you very much. He has covered all of the main issues, and I do not think there is anything else to add.

[Correspondent] Thank yo very much. Do you have any questions?

[Edalatiyan] No. Thank you very much for your time.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much for taking part in this program. Mr. Mir-Hoseyni was taking part in this program as a researcher and I took part as a presenter. I wish you successes.

Commentary Rejects Israeli Pilot Claim

LD2702154795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 27 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "The View Way", Monday morning February 27, quoted Zionist regime Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin as saying that the Israeli pilot Ron Arad is alive and is in Iran.

The Zionist claim over the fate of Ron Arad, whose plane crashed in 1986 in South Lebanon, has come in pursuit of the adverse propaganda campaign of the West. The West has claimed that there were closed-door talks between Tehran and Tel-Aviv over the release of the Israeli pilot.

What seems to be interesting in Rabin's new claim is his reference to eye-witnesses who he regard as evidence. According to Rabin, what has further assured Israel of Ron Arad's captivity in Iran is the information given by an individual called Manuchehr Mo'tamer and one of the South Lebanon militia commanders Mustafa al-Dirani. The Lebanese militia commander has been in Zionist jails since last month when he was kidnapped by Israeli terrorist agents.

There is maybe no need to repeat the scandalous political and propaganda event in the Jewish center in Buenos Aires, the event that turned into a scenario to wage a political war against Islamic Republic of Iran. In that incident Western propaganda machine accused Iran of involvement in the bombing in the Jewish center based on information obtained from Manuchehr Mo'tamer, the same person. Shortly after the incident it was revealed that Manuchehr Mo'tamer is a CIA agent. Consequently the Argentine officials denied Iran's involvement in the incident and blamed the Argentine terrorists for the blast.

At the information by the very same CIA agent works as hard evidence for the Zionist regime Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. Another source of information for the Israeli officials is a prisoner Mustafa al-Dirani who himself is a victim of Zionist kidnapping. It is obvious that comments by such people are not valid by the competent authorities.

Meanwhile, the informed politicians believe that the news on the release of the Israeli pilot is just a propaganda tool to counteract magnificent al-Quds rally all over the world and to cover up the terrorist measures of the Zionist regime. Otherwise the fate of a pilot who lost his life in an aggression against Lebanon is not that important for Israel.

13 Women Die in Electric Explosion During Prayers

LD2402174195 Tehran IRNA in English 1721 GMT 24 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rasht (Gilan), Feb. 24, IRNA—Thirteen women were killed as an electric bulb blew up with a loud boom at the women's section of the Friday congregational prayer here today, creating panic and sending women worshippers in a hysterical flight to the exit stairways.

The women reportedly lost their life as they tripped over on the stairs and were trampled on by a train of extremely frenzied women who were making for the exit in the wake of the blast.

36 others were also reported injured. All victims were immediately taken to a nearby hospital here Friday [24 February].

A source with the hospital told IRNA that all of the 13 had lost their life as a result of falling and also due to having been roughly kicked in the commotion. He said another 36 also had been injured for the same reason.

The blast was said to have been caused as the result of a short circuit in the wiring system of the hall that occurred as the leader of the Friday congregational prayers, Hojjat ol-Eslam Ehsanbakhs, was delivering sermons.

Farideh Soleymnai, an eye witness in the scene said she had personally heard the boom of the exploding bulb and seen the hasty flight on to the exit of women. She said she had also seen the falling down of three of them.

Majles Discusses Prices, Raising Taxes, New Deputy

LD2602140195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The open session of the Majles today discussed and approved a double urgency condition for the bill on economic violations.

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One of the clauses of the bill, which is to be discussed from the next open session, states that after the bill becomes law, the organization for state penal code will be responsible for dealing with cases of economic violations such as smuggling of goods or foreign currency. The organization will be have to deal with such cases according to related regulations.

The open session also passed 14 other articles of the Bill for Collection of Some State Revenues and Their Spending in Certain Cases that are increasing levies and taxes. [passage omitted: details of articles]

The session also approved the credentials of Mr. Habibollah Rashidi Kuchi, deputy from Marvedasht.

At the start of the session, Majles speaker thanked the ever-present people of our country for their active and comprehensive participation in the world al-Quds Day march.

He hoped that such presences would be the source of blessing for the liberation and construction of the holy land of Palestine, the first Qibla of the Muslims.

He also expressed sadness over the tragedy in Rasht's [Friday prayers] where several people passed away. He expressed condolences to their families.

Commentary on Price Controls, Violators

NC2802092895 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 28 Feb 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] During its latest session, which was held in the presence of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the headquarters for the market reorganization program reviewed effective steps for the procurement of staple goods. New measures to stabilize the prices of essential and sensitive goods and the intensification of the campaign against violators and troublemakers in the economic field were assessed.

Within this framework, the double-urgency bill for investigating economic violations will be discussed at the open Majles session to be held today. Thus, it is hoped that with the cooperation of the government and the Majles important practical steps will be taken for ending the state of flux in prices and the current shortcomings in the distribution of goods.

However, in conjunction with these actions, and to help the round-the-clock efforts by the officials, it is imperative that not even the slightest laxity should be shown to transgressors and unscrupulous elements. A serious and harsh approach toward violations and corruption will not only result in reining in and minimizing such malpractices but will also heighten the people's confidence in the officials and the system. In addition, it will boost the enthusiasm of the energetic and sincere individuals in serving the revolution and the people.

In tackling financial violations and corruption, the more stringent, drastic, and serious the approach toward the violators and unscrupulous elements, the more effective and tangible will be the results of the consistent cooperation of the people with the government's plans. The details then should be widely disseminated to the public.

Despite all of this, it should not be ignored that austerity in consumption in tandem with efforts to increase production is the most principled way of combating the price spiral and rectifying the country's economic structure. All economic, political, and even cultural policies of the country should be geared to a reduction in the pace of consumption in comparison with that of production. This will provide greater opportunities for investment and for moving along the path of development.

Accordingly, in view of the low level of consumption among the lesser income groups of society, it is necessary that the consumption of the higher income groups—which is mostly luxury goods, such as automobiles, household appliances, and large residential units—should be controlled by means of levies and heavy taxes.

Within the framework of this strategy [preceding word in English] the choice of a simple life, whether at home or in the office, by officials and managers would serve as a model and motivate the people to reduce consumption, boost national savings, and invest in production growth. This would enable us to terminate this problem of high prices and shortage of goods once and for all.

German SPD Official Announces Ties To Continue

LD2702131095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Chairman of NATO assembly and spokesman of German's Social Democratic Party has announced that Germany will continue its ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran despite the criticism by the United States and Israel. Our colleague has a report on this:

In an exclusive interview with the Voice and Vision of Iran, Karsten Voigt, president of the North Atlantic Assembly, and spokesman of Germany's Social Democratic Party [SPD], stated: Despite the United States's and Israel's criticism of Germany over its bilateral ties with Iran, Germany is determined to continue its cooperation and negotiation with Iran.

During the interview, he emphasized: Although our ties are good and friendly with the United States and Israel, this could not prevent our bilateral ties with Iran. He added: The United States claims that Iran supports terrorism. This is in a circumstance in which it has not presented any witness or evidence in this regard. He

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added: It is totally illogical that the West accuses the Iranian Government of terrorism and supports terrorist groups within it at the same time. Therefore, in view of this fact, our current policy of cooperation with Iran will continue.

About the hostile picture that has been created of Islam in the Western media, the president of the North Atlantic Assembly said: I confess that Europe has insufficient information about Islam and, in my view, dialogue between Islam and Christianity and with Iran, in particular, is very urgent.

Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Bonn.

Trade With Central Asia Said Gaining 'Momentum'

LD2802072395 Tehran IRNA in English 0604 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 28, IRNA—The cooperation between Iran and the Central Asian republics has gained a momentum since the collapse of the former Soviet Union, says a daily here.

The English-language daily TEHRAN TIMES editorialized on the signing of multi-billion dollar contracts between Iran and the Central Asian countries and underlined that the recent contracts show the drastic change in the nature of commercial cooperation between Iran and Central Asia.

A high-ranking Iranian delegation is heading to Uzbekistan today to discuss issues of bilateral interest such as cooperation in construction of roads and railways, said the daily, adding that the delegation headed by Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs, Mahmud Va'ezi, will be in Tashkent at the invitation of Va'ezi's Uzbek counterpart, (Shah Qasem Eslamov).

Among the important contracts signed between Iran and the Central Asian republics, TEHRAN TIMES has referred to the 8-billion dollar contract inked in September 1993 to explore the three oil fields in the Caspian Sea in which Iran's share of this lucrative contract is about dlr [dollars] 400 million.

Another important contract is the project to transfer the Turkmen gas to Europe via Iran and Turkey, the daily underlined.

President Rafsanjani has been one of the proponents of such trade, and has made it clear that Iran is ready to act as an intermediary in the trade with Central Asia, said the paper, adding that countries such as Malaysia, India, Indonesia and Brunei have shown an interest in doing trade with Central Asian countries through Iran.

The fact that Iran has respected the territorial integrity of these countries and has maintained brotherly relations with them, has helped the expansion of trade. It is only natural for Iran and these republics to resume their trade because, except for the Soviet era, they have always been involved in trade for ages, going back to such trade routes as the legendary silk road, TEHRAN TIMES concluded.

Commentary: Algerian Islamists' Massacres in Prison

NC2602085595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 26 Feb 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the strong reaction by world public opinion to the massacre of prisoners in Algeria, the military regime exasperatingly named an opposition group known as the Armed Islamic Group as the perpetrator of the Serkadji Prison incident. According to official figures, 96 prisoners were killed during the incident. However, Algeria's Muslim revolutionaries believe that this figure represents less than half the true number of people killed in this rare crime.

There have been similar massacres during the three years since the coupist regime came to power in Algeria. But the official toll of these massacres has never been published and world human rights organizations have not been sufficiently serious in following up this issue. Namely, no comprehensive and independent investigations were carried out and no details were published in connection with the massacre of prisoners in (Brughiyeh) prison in Azar [month ending 21 December 1994].

Apparently the military regime in Algeria is using this method to rid the prisons of Islamic activists who oppose the regime; and the killing of more than 80 Muslim revolutionaries during the recent carnage at Serkadji prison speaks of this. Meanwhile, the Algerian rulers are also trying to intimidate the other prisons with these methods.

However, the Algerian military regime's violence is not limited only to the Algerian prisons. Not a day passes without news of the killing of dozens of Algerian Muslim activists by Algerian security forces. According to figures published by Western sources, during the three years since the coupists came to power, more than 30,000 people have been the victims of violence in Algeria. During recent months and since the failure of political efforts by the military regime to stabilize its power, violence in Algeria has increased in an unprecedented way. Analysts believe that the intensification of repression is the last arrow in the quiver of the Algerian military regime that the regime wants to shoot into the dark.

Paper Calls For Ending 'Fratricide' in Karachi

LD2502230695 Tehran IRNA in English 2205 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 26, IRNA—According to a fax received here from the English daily

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TEHRAN TIMES, the editorial for the Sunday [26 February] issue of the daily commented on the Saturday's attacks by masked gunmen on two Karachi mosques in which a number of worshippers were killed.

In yet another example of internecine violence in the city that has taken the course of self-destruction, masked gunmen barged into two Karachi mosques on Saturday morning, killing 20 worshipers and wounding eight.

The city is torn apart, and so is the Pakistani community, over what is termed as the most protracted and vicious circle of violence between the Shias and the Sunni, the article stated.

What is really at stake at this stage, and what really requires the immediate attention of the Islamic states, is that the continuation of such violence is not in the interest of the Muslim world.

Before other states get involved in this issue, the Government of Pakistan, has to decide whether it wants to continue to abdicate its responsibility as it relates to the security of the God-forsaken city of Karachi. As Shuaib Bukkari, the leader of Pakistan's MQM party, said Saturday on BBC satellite TV, before 1992 there was no such violence in Karachi, the editorial underlined.

So it seems that the government of Benazir Bhutto has to take concrete measures to stop a dangerous phenomenon, aided and abetted by such outside forces as the Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia, can destroy the fabric of Pakistani society and erode the trust that the Pakistani voters have put in their elected government.

The daily also commented that to resolve this problem, Muslims from all walks of life should become more aware of the plots of the western governments that want to see a disunited, and hence weak and servile, Muslim world. Muslims should come to terms with the reality that, as different hues of the Islamic rainbow, they must respect other Muslims who might have a different orientation.

We are living in the age of communication, in the age of infobahns, of information. The United Nations declared Saturday that 1995 will be the year of tolerance. We are living in an age of heightened sensitivity to the plight and human predicament of our brother men and sister women. Muslims should learn to live in peace, in brotherhood, as the believers in one allah, one holy Koran, one last messenger. the religious arguments between different sects should be left to the religious scholars. The Muslim youth should refrain from being a pawn in the political and personal rivalries among unscrupulous leaders that have no aim but self-aggrandizement at any cost, even at the cost of killing worshipers at mosques in Karachi, the article said.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as the country that has taken the leadership position among the Islamic ummah, is in a position to offer its mediation efforts to bring this ugly fratricide to an end. The Organization of the Islamic Conference too should take heed of the suffering of the people of Karachi. They must send their task force to that city to make sure that this war comes to an end before Karachi ceases to exist.

*Official on Plans To Build New Factories in Qeshm

95LA0102A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 12 Jan 95 p 14

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Service—Four producing factories and a 400-room hotel are to be built in the Qeshm free-trade zone. Likewise, branch offices of foreign banks will soon begin operating at Qeshm.

Engineer Bushehri, executive director of the free-trade zone, announced the above and said: A chemical fertilizer factory is to be built at Qeshm in a joint effort by Iran and India. Its construction is expected to cost $350 million, and after it goes into operation it will produce 100,000 tons of fertilizer per year.

He also discussed the construction of a ferromanganese factory. He said: The Qeshm Metals Company and the Esfahan Iron Foundry are investing to build this industrial unit, and the groundbreaking ceremony will be held in the next few days. This unit has a capacity of 30,000 tons, and 60 million rials [R] credit has been provided for it. When it goes into operation $20 million in foreign exchange will be saved each year.

He noted: With the participation of foreign countries, an MTBE [Methyltributyl ether] methanol petrochemical factory is to be built at Qeshm, and its products will replace unleaded gasoline.

He noted: With Japanese participation and $250 million in investment, a porous iron factory will be built, and this project is in now in the credit stages.

According to Bushehri, a Canadian company is also ready to build a 400-room hotel at Qeshm, and the agreement for it has been signed.

The executive director of the Qeshm free-trade zone said in conclusion: With the approval of the monetary and financial guidelines for these kinds of zones, the foreign bank branches who will conduct the foreign exchange operations will soon begin their activities at the Qeshm free-trade zone.

Second Wind-Driven Power Plant Operational

95LA0102G Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 12 Jan 95 p 13

[FBIS Translated Text] Late next week the nation's second wind-driven electrical power plant will open at Rudbar.

The Public Relations Office of the Iran Atomic Energy Organization reports that Engineer Ahmadi, executive officer for the Nation's New Energies Research and Application Project, announced the above. He said: In

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the first two weeks after it went into experimental operation, electrical power production at the first unit in Manjil was more than 100 megawatt-hours, which is a world record in wind-driven electrical power production.

He discussed the fact that new successes are achieved daily in the five active sections in the Nation's New Energies Research and Application Center at the Iran Atomic Energy Organization. The program to build a 150-megawatt wind-driven electrical power plant is one of the goals the above center has proposed for the nation's Second Five-Year Development Plan.

Engineer Ahmadi added: Among the outstanding benefits of this type of power plant are a rapid return, the lack of any kind of pollution, suitability for the environment, and the advanced technology.

Pakistan

Officials Report More Violence in Karachi

18 Killed at 'Religious Institutions'

BK2502081595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 25 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Karachi, 18 persons were killed in incidents of firing at two religious institutions early this morning. This has been stated by a spokesman for the commissioner of Karachi.

26 Killed; Newspaper Office Attacked

BK2602082095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to a press note issued by the Sindh Home Department in Karachi yesterday, 26 people were killed in different incidents of shooting by unknown assailants in the city yesterday. Of this, 22 people were killed in shooting incidents at two places of worship in PID Colony and PACHS areas in the city. The press note adds that some miscreants entered the offices of the daily NAWA-I-WAQT in the city and ransacked and set fire to the offices. As a result the newspaper office was partially gutted. It further says that miscreants burned eight vehicles in different parts of the city.

Security Tightened; 3 Killed Overnight

BK2802085695 Hong Kong AFP in English 0613 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KARACHI, Pakistan, Feb 28 (AFP)—Three people were shot dead overnight in various sniper attacks, and gunmen opened fire at a mosque in the city's central district, but no one there was injured, police and witnesses said Tuesday [28 February].

The fatal shootings were not motivated by the religious tensions that have gripped Karachi, the nation's commercial capital since Saturday, when 20 worshippers were gunned down in attacks on two Shi'ite Moslem mosques, police said.

Worshippers fled in panic when the attackers began shooting outside the central-district mosque late Monday, and the assailants dispersed when security officers near the mosque moved in, the witnesses said.

Police guards have been deployed near many Shi'ite and Sunni Moslem mosques since Saturday to prevent an escalation of the religious violence. Paramilitary troops and police also set up checkpoints near major shopping centres.

Security has been intensified as the Moslem festival Eid Al-Fitr approaches. The festival marks the end of Ramadan, the Moslem month of fasting, and shopping centres are usually crowded in the few days before the holiday.

Monday remained relatively peaceful, but by Monday night reports of random shootings were reported from several places, adding to the general tension in the city. At least four people were injured, hospitals said.

Taleban Requests Policy Revision on Transit Trade

BK2602112795 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 26 Feb 95 pp 1, 2

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Peshawar—The Taleban have asked Pakistan to revise its policy on Afghan Transit Trade (ATT), and threatened to reciprocate in the same manner if Islamabad created obstacles to the Afghan trade caravans, crossing Pak-Afghan border at Chaman into Kandahar.

This was made clear by one of the Taleban spokesman, Mullah Allahdad Akhund and Taleban's minister for local bodies in Kandahar, Maulvi Abbas Akhund, during their visit to Islamabad for talks over the release of trucks carrying cotton bales from Turkmenistan to Pakistan.

The convoy was recently stopped by the newly-emerged force. Taleban, in Kandahar demanding that Pakistan should revise its rules regarding Afghan Transit Trade. Taleban also demanded that the convoy would not be released unless Pakistan gave permission for the transportation of the cargo, exported under ATT rules, and currently lying in Peshawar and Karachi, to Afghanistan.

Later a Pakistani official travelled to Kandahar and persuaded the Taleban leaders to release the stuck up convoy and in future detailed talks would be held on the modalities for trade talks.

Taleban sources in Quetta confirmed that some trucks had been allowed to enter Pakistan, but the remaining trucks would not move until Pakistan gave permission

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for the transportation of cargo meant for Afghanistan. They also confirmed that Taleban delegation had recently held talks with Pakistani officials, including Interior Minister Naseerullah Babar over the fate of held-up convoy and future transit trade to Afghanistan, but without any progress as the latter (Islamabad) was not interested.

The Taleban sources also made it clear that in future Pakistan had to go get a prior approval of Taleban to pass through Kandahar either way.

Spokesman for Taleban Mufti Masoom said in a threatening tone "Pakistan cannot make trade links with Central Asia or Moscow without giving Afghans the desired concessions in transit trade".

Afghans Oppose Further Restrictions

BK2702113295 Karachi DAWN in English 27 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb 26: The Taleban, followed by Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Eslami and President Rabbani's Jam'iyat have strongly protested against Pakistan's decision on Sunday [26 February] to put eight more items on the negative list for the Afghan transit trade raising it to fifteen.

According to the Pakistani-based spokesmen for the three parties: "Smuggling has been going on for the last forty years, why has Pakistan suddenly decided to clamp down?" they question, with a warning that unless Islamabad relaxes the transit trade restrictions, the route between Central Asia and Pakistan through Afghanistan would not be allowed to operate.

Last week, the Taleban had held up most of the 55,000 bales of cotton shipped from Ashkabad to Pakistan through Afghanistan would not be allowed to operate.

Last week, the Taleban had held up most of the 55,000 bales of cotton shipped from Ashkabad to Pakistan through Afghanistan. While a couple of trucks were later released, the Taleban's patience is fast running out, according to Taleban's spokesman.

But, now with another eight items on the negative list, Pakistan should be prepared to invite the reprisal by the Taleban, who paradoxically proved to be a blessing in disguise when they rescued a Pakistani trade caravan bound for Ashkabad last October from the clutches of Afghan commanders. However, the Taleban now blame Pakistan for "trying to twist their arms through the trade ban in order to pressure them into accepting the UN peace plan which has again fallen through".

Efforts To Stop Misuse of Trade

BK2602153095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 26 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has firmly stated that there will be no restriction on genuine Afghan transit trade, but nothing will be allowed under its garb against the country's economic security.

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad, a spokesman of the Central Board of Revenue explained measures to check misuse of Afghan transit trade facilities. The steps include making smuggling difficult through fiscal measures, streamlining of Customs intelligence and vigilance, and gearing up operations of Frontier Constabulary. In order to check misuse of transit trade and proliferation of (?black) markets, the negative list of import items for Afghanistan has been raised to 15 as of the current month.

To a question, he said Pakistan suffered a loss of 3 billion rupees in revenue in only six months besides adverse effects on domestic industry due to this misuse. Eight hundred railways wagons containing contraband in the name of Afghan transit trade have been detained. They would only be released after the importers pay normal duties.

Editorial Previews Bhutto Visit to U.S.

BK2702150495 Lahore JANG in Urdu 25 Feb 95 p 14

[Editorial: "The Determination To Hold Talks with the United States on an Equitable Basis"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has stated that during her forthcoming visit to the United States, she will make efforts for the resumption of bilateral relations on an equitable basis. She said: Some think that I am going to the United States to acquire F-16 aircraft, but that is not so. I am visiting the United States to strengthen bilateral ties. Previously, U.S. ties with Pakistan were characterized by assistance or charity, but now that will not be so. I will hold talks with the United States on an equitable basis. Today our relations are those of trading partners. The United States will provide aircraft to Pakistan or return the money.

Bhutto's visit to the United States is expected to take place within a few weeks. The views she has expressed on Pakistan-U.S. ties prior to her visit and the opposition's criticisms of the government can, no doubt, be described as those which reflect the feelings of the people of an independent and sovereign state. From the very beginning, strong criticisms have been leveled by opposition parties against the government. It has been stated to such an extent that Bhutto was brought to power to fulfill certain specific interests of the United States. Opposition leaders have alleged constantly that Bhutto has compromised on national interests in the Kashmir dispute and on the nuclear program. The opposition has made this allegation a permanent element of political confrontation against the government and the present government has, on several occasions, categorically announced that it would not accept any unilateral decision on the question of nuclear nonproliferation. It is a matter of satisfaction that responsible quarters in the United States have also understood Pakistan's position

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in a more positive way. Now Pakistan no longer faces one- sided pressure on the nuclear issue. These American circles have also admitted that exerting unfair pressure on Pakistan on the nuclear program is inappropriate nor is the Pressler Amendment helpful in eliminating an arms race in South Asia. Similarly, understanding of Pakistan's position on the Kashmir dispute has improved. In every visit abroad, Bhutto raises the Kashmir issue and leaves no stone unturned to apprise international public opinion of its serious consequences, especially the shameful atrocities committed by Indian troops on the innocent Muslims of occupied Kashmir. As a result of this constant struggle of the government, several responsible officials of the United States besides the defense secretary have admitted that Kashmir is a disputed territory. Hence, the present government, to a great extent, has made the United States, the only superpower, endorse its views on the nuclear program and the Kashmir dispute. It is a another matter of gratification that the government is gradually winning the support at home of all political parties on the Kashmir dispute. The opposition leader, Mian Nawaz Sharif, has signed the Kashmir Declaration. This declaration reflects government policy on Kashmir. After this, saying that the government has compromised on the Kashmir issue does not speak well of the opposition.

The visit to the United States by the prime minister will no doubt be of great significance. After experiencing a downward trend for a long time, the relations between the two countries have become cordial. The present government has taken steps to break the stalemate in foreign policy. Against the backdrop of political change and the regional relationship to the global scenario, Pakistan is an important country due to its geographic location. It all depends on the government how its importance is projected. During Bhutto's visit, delicate issues like Kashmir and nuclear policy will be discussed with U.S. officials. The support of the opposition parties on these issues will strengthen the hand of the prime minister. National cohesion and unanimity of views on such occasions will prove helpful in protecting national interests. It will be better if Bhutto also tries to take the opposition into her confidence on important national issues, including these two vital problems, prior to her visit to the United States. In his capacity as prime minister, the late Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto took the opposition leaders into his confidence prior to his visit to India and succeeded subsequently in concluding a dignified accord.

Ahmad Ali on Indian Missiles, Kashmir, U.S. Ties

BK2802102695 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 28 Feb 95 pp 1, 5

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb 27—While announcing the continuance of its peaceful nuclear programme, Pakistan asked India to stop its missile proliferation programme failing which Pakistan would revive its missile development programme.

Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali made this observation at a panel interview for PTV programme here this afternoon. He warned India to stop threatening Pakistan of war and said that if war was thrust on Pakistan, it was fully capable of defending itself.

The Foreign Minister said that instead of making bellicose statements, India should come to the conference table to resolve the core issue of Kashmir.

Talking about India's massive missile development programme and arms build-up, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali in a very firm tone said that Pakistan had been keeping a close watch on India's mad race for missile development programme. He said: "We desire peace in the region and are very keen to make South Asia free of nuclear weapons as well as weapons of mass destruction. But if any threat is posed to Pakistan's territorial integrity, Pakistan will use every capability to defend itself."

Talking about Paki-India relations in the context of Kashmir issue, the Foreign Minister blamed India for creating tensions in the region. He said that Pakistan had made several moves to draw India into a constructive dialogue over the Kashmir issue. He said that without resolution of the Kashmir issue peace and stability could not be restored in the region. By turning down Pakistan's two non-papers, he said, India had proved that it was not interested in maintenance of peace and stability in the region. This, he said, demonstrated India's hegemonistic designs and that it did not want to put an end to human rights violations being committed by India's 600,000 security troops. The Foreign Minister reaffirmed that Pakistan would continue to extend moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people. He said the present Government of Pakistan had been able to put India under pressure and resultantly international community had acknowledged Kashmir to be a burning international issue.

On Pakistan US relations, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said that despite Pressler amendment, the two governments had decided to open a new chapter of their relationship based on common economic and security perceptions. With massive US investment in Pakistan, we were building our relations with the US on the basis of equality, he said. "What more a conscientious nation can wish for than stand on a par with superpower rather than holding beggars bowl!" he said.

The Foreign Minister expressed the hope that after Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's visit to the US, bilateral relations between the two countries would take a new impetus.

Replying to a question, he described the revival of the Pak-US consultative group as demonstrative of the renewed US interest in Pakistan in the face of new economic realities and Pakistan's strategic importance in the region. He categorically denied that there had been a sell-out or a compromise on the country's nuclear programme. "Let me reassure the nation that there has been

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absolutely no compromise on this matter," he said. He said that though Pakistan had acquired the capability of making atom bomb, a conscious decision had been taken at the highest level not to produce N-weapons. "Our programme is entirely peaceful."

Replying to a question on F-16s, he said that the matter was likely to be resolved in the Pak-US consultative committee meetings. He said, "I hope we will get back our money if we don't get F-16s".

About prospects of peace in Afghanistan, he said that Pakistan welcomed any initiatives taken for restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan. Pakistan's main concern, he said, was that Afghanistan remained united. He said that Pakistan had no hand in raising Taleban.

Sri Lanka

LTTE Leader Criticizes Government Over Talks

'Deception' Said Causing Stalemate

BK2802060595 Hong Kong AFP in English 0533 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Feb 28 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger guerrilla chief has accused the Colombo government of "deception" and a lack of will to establish a permanent ceasefire.

Velupillai Prabhakaran, the supremo of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a letter to President Chandrika Kumaratunga expressed disappointment over what he called the government giving priority to military "subterfuge."

"It really astonishes us that you are not showing any keeness to extend the present temporary cessation of hostilities into a permanent, durable ceasefire," he said in his letter, obtained here Tuesday [28 February].

He also lambasted Kumaratunga's Secretary, Kusumsiri Balapatabendi, who is the chief government negotiator and accused him of taking unilateral action against the interest of their peace process, which is currently deadlocked.

Balapatabendi was denounced for announcing the opening of a safe passage to LTTE-held northern Jaffna peninsula last week without conceding LTTE demands. The move was aimed at gaining propoganda mileage, Prabhakaran said.

"It cannot be of any use in taking the peace process forward. We are surely disappointed over this," Prabhakaran said, and added: "The talk about lifting the embargo on all essentials (to Jaffna) is another piece of deception."

Kumaratunga in turn has accused the LTTE of dodging the issue of substantive political negotiations and instead wanting to talk only about day-to-day economic issues affecting LTTE-held regions in the island's northeast.

'Propaganda Ploy' Seen

BK2802060195 Hong Kong AFP in English 0341 GMT 28 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Feb 28 (AFP)—Tamil Tiger guerrillas Tuesday [28 February] accused the Sri Lankan government of mounting a propoganda offensive against them amid a deadlock in moves to end the island's drawn-out ethnic bloodletting.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in a statement released from its London office, said Colombo's announcement of opening a safe passage to rebel-held northern Jaffna peninsula was only a propoganda ploy.

The LTTE said it wanted a key army camp along the way dismantled, the economic embargo on Jaffna lifted completely, and unrestricted fishing in the island's north permitted before agreeing to open the land route to their stronghold.

Chief government negotiator Kusumsiri Balapatabendi announced last week that the army was pulling back its defence lines at the controversial Pooneryn camp in a bid to open the land route, and was hoping the Tigers would cooperate.

The government decision to open the Pooneryn route as well another land route through the Elephant Pass military facility at the southern entrance to Jaffna was conveyed to the LTTE political section chief, Thamil Chelvam.

The LTTE has blocked land routes to Jaffna, saying it was to prevent security forces using the road to march into their heartland of Jaffna where the rebels run a de facto separate state.

"Making unilateral announcements such as opening of both routes to the public, that are meaningless in practice, while failing to attend to the basic day-to-day needs of our people begins to shake our confidence in a government on which we have placed trust from the begining," the two-page statement said.

It also accused the government of using its "privileged position" to brief foreign news agencies on "various claims that are contrary to ground realities. It also charged that the assurances given by the government had never been met.

"We even wonder whether supplying sunshine stories to the outside world is only part of the government strategy to throw the ball into the LTTE court all the time.

"Trying to win foreign aid for the apparent purpose of reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war-ravaged northeast, which could again be used for war purposes, is

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certainly not the way to win the confidence of the Tamil people," the LTTE said.

The strongly-worded statement came as talks between the LTTE and the government were at a stalemate. Both sides have blamed each other for the delay in resuming negotiations. However, a truce has been holding since January 8.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga initiated a peace process with the LTTE after she won the August parliamentary elections.

Over 30,000 people have died in Sri Lanka's protracted Tamil separatist campaign in the past 23 years. Tigers have been fighting for independence from majority Sinhalese.

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